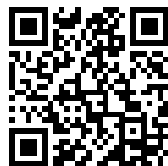


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*The Life of Saint Philip Neri, Apostle  
of Rome, and Founder of the ...*

Pietro Giacomo Bacci







**THE LIFE OF  
SAINT PHILIP NERI**

**VOL. I**

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THE LIFE OF  
SAINT PHILIP NERI

APOSTLE OF ROME, AND FOUNDER  
OF THE CONGREGATION OF  
THE ORATORY

FROM THE ITALIAN OF

FATHER BACCI, *Pietro Giacomo*  
OF THE ROMAN ORATORY

*NEW AND REVISED EDITION*

EDITED BY

FREDERICK IGNATIUS ANTROBUS  
OF THE LONDON ORATORY

VOL. I

LONDON  
KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH, TRÜBNER & CO. L<sup>TD</sup>  
PATERNOSTER HOUSE, CHARING CROSS ROAD  
1902

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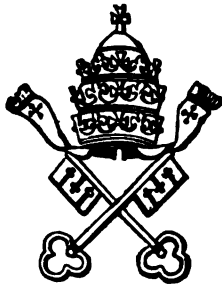
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## VOL. I

	PAGE
IMPRIMATUR . . . . .	vii
DEDICATION . . . . .	ix
PREFACE TO PRESENT EDITION . . . . .	xi
PEDIGREE OF ST. PHILIP . . . . .	xv
NOTES ON THE CHRONOLOGY OF ST. PHILIP'S LIFE . . . . .	xvii
PREFACE OF VENETIAN EDITOR . . . . .	xxvii
TABLE OF THE POPES . . . . .	xxxvii
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS . . . . .	xxxix
CONTENTS OF LIFE OF ST. PHILIP . . . . .	xli
BOOKS I.-III. . . . .	3-39 <sup>2</sup>





*We hereby approve of this Series of Lives of the Canonized Saints and Servants of God, and recommend it to the faithful of our District, as likely to promote the glory of God, the increase of devotion, and the spread of our holy Religion.*

*Given at Birmingham, this 29th day of October, 1847.*

*Thomas  
Bishop of Combyopolis*

*Nicholas  
Bishop of Melipalemus*





TO  
**THE SECULAR CLERGY**  
OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN ENGLAND,  
THE SUCCESSORS AND SPIRITUAL CHILDREN  
OF GENERATIONS OF MARTYRS,  
WHO,  
BY THEIR CHEERFULNESS IN HOLY POVERTY,  
THEIR DILIGENCE  
IN OBSCURITY AND UNDER OPPRESSION,  
THEIR UNEXAMPLED CONFIDENCE  
IN THE TRUTHS THEY TAUGHT,  
THEIR FORGIVING CHARITY  
TOWARDS UNGENEROUS OPPONENTS,  
AND THEIR SELF-DENYING KINDNESS TOWARDS THOSE  
WHOM THEIR PRAYERS, THEIR SACRIFICES,  
AND THEIR SUFFERINGS  
RESCUED FROM THE DARKNESS OF ERROR,  
**HAVE PRESERVED TO THEIR COUNTRY,**  
TOGETHER WITH THE PRECIOUS EXAMPLE  
OF THEIR OWN VIRTUES,  
THE UNFAILING LIGHT  
**OF THE CATHOLIC FAITH,**  
AND THE HEREDITARY DEVOTION TO THE HOLY SEE  
WHICH DISTINGUISHED  
THE PILGRIMS AND SAINTS OF SAXON TIMES,  
AND THE PRINCELY BUILDERS  
OF OUR NORMAN CHURCHES.

ST. WILFRID'S,  
TRANSLATION OF ST. THOMAS OF CANTERBURY,  
MDOCCCLVII.



## PREFACE TO PRESENT EDITION

WHEN Father Faber began, in 1847, the series of translations of Lives of the Saints, under the title of "The Saints and Servants of God," the life of St. Philip Neri, Apostle of Rome, and founder of the Congregation of the Oratory, was the first to engage his attention. It appeared in two volumes, 8vo, translated from the enlarged and corrected edition of the Life of the Saint, by Father Pietro Giacomo Bacci, of the Roman Oratory, published at Rome by Marini in 1837.

In 1851 a new edition of Bacci's classical work, *La Vita di San Filippo Neri*, had appeared in Florence, comprising certain emendations, and additions from the Lives of the Saint by Fathers Gallonio, Bernabei, Ricci, and others, which were incorporated in the text, together with twelve additional Letters of the Saint unknown to previous editors.

The translation of the Life of St. Philip, published in 1847, had been long out of print, when, in 1868, a second edition appeared. In order to compress it into one volume, the Fifth and Sixth Books, recording the miracles wrought by the Saint during his lifetime and after his death, and the Letters were omitted; but the

## xii PREFACE TO PRESENT EDITION

various additions made in the Florence edition of the Life by Bacci were inserted.

After a space of thirty-four years this second edition has been long out of print, and is rarely to be met with. A new impression being a desideratum for the devotees of the Saint, it has been thought advisable to reprint the Fifth and Sixth Books and the Letters, and make two volumes of the work.

The miracles are of themselves most interesting reading, and, moreover, give a graphic picture of Italian life in the beginning of the seventeenth century; they also help us to understand better the rapid increase of devotion to St. Philip in Italy.

A few notes touching on personages and places connected with St. Philip have been added. For those interested in the older lives of the Saint, a translation of the Preface to *La Vita di San Filippo Neri*, published at Venice in 1794, which appears in the Florence edition of 1851, has been added. In more recent times, Italy, France, Spain, Germany, have each contributed to the History of the Life and Times of St. Philip. In France appeared, in 1859, *La Vie de St. Philippe de Néri*, par l'Abbé Bayle. In England, Mrs. Hope published her life of St. Philip Neri, which is a small but valuable work.<sup>1</sup> In connection with the English lives of the Saint, it is interesting to mention the following work—"The Holy Life of Philip Neri, Founder of the Congregation of the Oratory, trans-

<sup>1</sup> Published *s.a.*, but *circa* 1868.

lated out of the Latin Copy by Jacobus Baccius, small 8vo, Paris, 1656." It is published anonymously, but was probably translated by one of the many exiles for the Faith from England, who were frequenters, at some time or other, of the Oratory in Rome.

In Italy, in 1879, appeared by far the most important of all modern works on St. Philip—*La Vita di San Filippo Neri*—written by Father Alfonso Capece-latro, for many years Superior of the Oratory of Naples, now Cardinal-Archbishop of Capua, and Librarian of the Holy Roman Church. This Life is not written in the old Hagiographical style, but consists of a flowing narrative, comprising an account of the relations of St. Philip with the contemporary Saints, holy Personages, Popes, Cardinals, Roman nobles, painters, and musicians. Of this work a version in English appeared in 1882, made by Father Thomas Alder Pope, of the Birmingham Oratory, to whose kindness the present Editor is indebted for permission to publish a translation by the Very Rev. F. Ignatius Dudley Ryder, Superior of the Birmingham Oratory, of two Sonnets of the Saint, and St. Philip's genealogical tree.

The notes on the chronology of St. Philip's life were compiled by the late F. Richard Stanton, of the London Oratory, and were found among his papers at his death.

In conclusion, this New Edition of the Life of St. Philip, it is hoped, may prove acceptable to the many in England, and English-speaking countries, to whom

xiv      PREFACE TO PRESENT EDITION

his memory and virtues have become as household words, and who have felt the influence of the teaching and life of the Saint reproduced in our time in the lives and writings of two of St. Philip's most gifted sons, John Henry, Cardinal Newman, and Father Wilfrid Faber.

F. I. A.

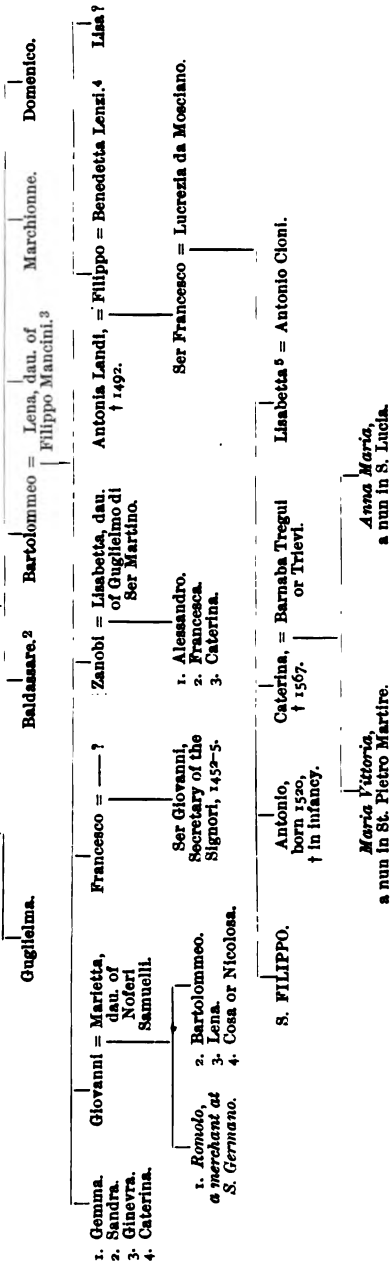
THE ORATORY, LONDON, S.W.,  
*Feast of St. Philip, 1902.*

# PEDIGREE OF ST. PHILIP

ARMS: Azure, three stars or.]

Neri = Nera, dau. of Ser Neri,  
of Treggiaja.

Lias Sontori = Ser Giovanni,<sup>1</sup> Secretary = Gemma Baroncelli,  
of Bishop Corsini, † 1418.



1 In his will, drawn up in 138; he is described as *nobilis vir Ser Joannes Neri*; Gemma Baroncelli, his second wife, was of one of the noblest families of Tuscany.  
 2 From Baldasare and his brothers are probably descended several families of Neri, whom we find in the Val d'Aro.  
 3 Lena was of noble parentage; the name of Philip was introduced by her into the Neri family, in memory of her father, Philip Mancini.

4 Ser Filippo's second wife came of the ancient and noble family of the Lenzi of Florence, from whom descended the Polish royal family, the Lenziachi or Leczinski. It will be remembered that the Queen of Louis XV. of France was Maria Leczinska, daughter of the dispossessed King Stanislaus Leczinski.  
 5 Lisabetta survived St. Philip, and was the last of the family. It was from her that Nero del Nero, Baron of Porcigliano, obtained permission to quarter the arms of the Neri with his own.





## NOTES ON THE CHRONOLOGY OF ST. PHILIP'S LIFE<sup>1</sup>

BROCCHI, *Vita dei SS. Fiorentini*, vol. i. p. 49c, gives the pedigree of St. Philip, from Neri of Castelfranco, A.D. 1330. He says the surname Neri is an abbreviation of Ranieri.

The Arms, which he says are accurately taken from the tomb of the said Neri, have the stars with eight points, not mullets of five points, as they are usually

A.D. drawn.

1515. St. Philip Neri was born on Saturday, 21st July

---

<sup>1</sup> These notes are taken almost entirely (except where otherwise stated) from the Life of the Saint written by GALLONIO in the form of Annals and published in Rome in 1600 under the following title: *Vita Beati P. Philippi Nerii Florentini Congregationis Oratorii Fundatoris in Annos Digesta. Auctore Antonio Gallonio Romano ejusdem Congregationis Presbytero. Cum Privilegio Summi Pont. Romae apud Aloysium Zannettum anno Jubilei, MDC.*

On the reverse of title-page to the first edition occurs the following "Approbatio," which may be of interest to the Reader:—

"Nos Angelus Vellius Praenestinus Congregationis Oratorii Praepositus Generalis, et Deputati, Vitae Beati Philippi Nerii Florentini ejusdem Congregationis Fundatoris, libros tres à P. Antonio Gallonio editos, per duos nostrae Congregationis Sacerdotes recognosci mandavimus: quos cum illi approbaverint, eosdēq; Amplissimi S.R.E. Cardinales infrascripti approbent, probamus etiā, ut imprimi possint, modò placuerit Reverendissimis Dominis Vicesgerenti, et P. Magistro Sacri Palatii. Datum Romae die SS. Christi martyrum Papiae et Mauri quarto Kal. Februarias an. 1600.

"Omnia, quae de Beato Philippo Nerio conscripta sunt, partim propriis me oculis vidisse, partim certo gravissimorum virorum sermone cognovisse attestor ego

Octavius Tituli S. Alexii Presbyter Card. Paravicinus.

VOL. I.

xvii

b

## xviii CHRONOLOGY OF ST. PHILIP'S LIFE

A.D.

1515. 1515, at 6 hours of the night—that is, at 2 A.M. (he died at the same hour, 26th May 1595). He was baptized the next day, under the names of Filippo Romolo.

Brocchi says that in those parts every one then took Romolo as a second name. The Saint's brother, born in 1520, was Antonio Romolo.

The Saint was born in the "Populo di S. Pier Gattolini."

Brocchi says the house is now incorporated in the Convent of the Convertite, where there is a well, called *Pozzo di S. Filippo*. Before the birth of Antony in 1520 his father had left this house.

The Saint's father, Francesco, married Lucrezia da Mosciano, 1st April 1513. She was the Saint's mother, and her mother was Lena (not Lucrezia) Soldi. Francesco did not marry a second time; it was his stepmother, Benedetta Lenzi, who kept house for him and was so attached to the Saint. Francesco died 11th October 1559. (CAPECELATRO.)

1520. At the age of five Philip shows extraordinary signs of goodness and obedience.

---

Federicus S. Mariae Angelorum Presb. Card. Borromaeus.  
Franciscus Maria Card. Tituli S. Bartholomaei Archiepiscopus Senen.  
Caesar Card. Baronius Tituli SS. Nerei et Achillei.  
Alphonsus S. Sixti Presbyter Card. Vicecomes.

Angelus Vellius Praepositus.

Petrus Peracchionus }  
Germanicus Fidelis } Deputati.  
Thomas Bozzius }  
Juvenalis Ancina }

Imprimatur.

P. Episcopus Ravellen, Vicesgerens :

F. Gregorius Servantius Reverendissimi P. Magistri Sacri  
Palatii socius.

CHRONOLOGY OF ST. PHILIP'S LIFE xix

A.D.

1522 or 23. The accident of the Ass:—BACCI says it was at Castelfranco; GALLONIO seems to imply that it was at Florence.

1526. At the age of eleven he goes to the sermons of Fra Balduino, and frequents the Dominicans of S. Marco. (BACCI.)

About this time he studies grammar and afterwards rhetoric under Clemente.

1530 or 31. He has a dangerous fever. The fire in his father's house about the same time. (BACCI.)

The Saint leaves Florence for S. Germano and Rome.

Romolo Neri, to whom he was sent, was first cousin to his father Francesco, and "zio cugino" (*oncle à la mode de Bretagne*) of the Saint.—See BROCCHI's pedigree, and *supra*, p. xv.

1533. GALLONIO says that the Saint was 18 years of age when sent to S. Germano, and that he stayed *only a few days* and then went to Rome in the year 1533.

How, then, could he so often visit the Crucifix at Gaeta?

BACCI also says that he was about 18 when sent to S. Germano; that after being there a few days he resolved to quit the world; that he often visited the Crucifix at Gaeta; that he remained there about *two years*, and then went to Rome in the year 1533.

Here, too, there is clearly some mistake.

BROCCHI (vol. i. p. 478), without giving his authority, says it is a mistake to say that he was 18, that in fact he was only 15 when sent to S. Germano; that he stayed there about two years, and then went to Rome. At p. 498 he says Philip had not completed his 15th year when he went to S. Germano in 1529, and that he went to Rome in 1533, which would make his stay at S. Germano at least *three years*.

The two accounts of BROCCHI are therefore hardly

## xx CHRONOLOGY OF ST. PHILIP'S LIFE

- A.D.  
1533. consistent, and difficult to reconcile with the account of the fever at Florence in 1530 or 31.  
All agree that he arrived in Rome in 1533.  
BERNABEI says he was *almost* 18 when he went to S. Germano, and that he stayed there two years; but does not say in what year he went to Rome.
1533. St. Philip came to Rome in 1533, on the 21st of July, in which year he completed his 18th year. He went immediately to live in the house of Galeotto Caccia. Here he remained many years, apparently till he was ordained in 1551, leading the life of a hermit. The two sons of G. Caccia were called, the one Michele and the other Ippolito. Michele became later on Rector of the Church of San Donato in Citille near Florence, and Ippolito a Cistercian Monk under the name of Don Andrea — according to MANNI, *Ragionamenti sulla Vita di San Filippo*.
- 1534 or 35. GALLONIO seems to say he began to study philosophy in 1534. BACCI says after two years, *i.e.* in 1535. After philosophy he reads theology.
1537. GALLONIO thinks it was in 1537 that he completed his studies, sold his books, and gave himself solely to prayer. He then began to visit the Seven Churches and the catacombs at night. BACCI reports that he was said by F. Cardone to have lived in the catacombs for ten years (also BROCCHI, vol. i. p. 479), though his domicile was with Caccia he also visits the hospitals at this time.
1538. He begins to frequent public places and to convert sinners.
1539. In this year he was "*Squittinato ai Officiali di Palazzo dei Beneficiati*" at Florence at his father's wish, but without success. (BROCCHI, p. 504.)
1544. A little before the feast of Pentecost 1544, just before

## CHRONOLOGY OF ST. PHILIP'S LIFE xxi

- A.D.
1544. completing his 29th year, he received the miraculous gift of the Holy Ghost and the palpitation of his heart.
1548. On the 16th August 1548, with Persiano Rosa he begins the Confraternity of the Most Holy Trinity at S. Salvatore in Campo. BACCI says that it was at first only for exercises of piety, and that in the jubilee year of 1550 they began to receive pilgrims and lastly convalescents. GALLONIO says they began with convalescents and took pilgrims in 1550.
1549. Converts Prospero Crivelli.
1550. He is miraculously saved, when he fell into a trench; gives alms to an angel; has a vision of St. John Baptist.
1551. In obedience to his confessor, Persiano Rosa, he receives the tonsure, four minor orders, and the sub-diaconate, in March 1551, at S. Tommaso in Parione, the diaconate on Holy Saturday, 29th March, at S. John Lateran, and the priesthood at S. Tommaso, 23rd May of the same year.
- He goes to reside at S. Girolamo, where he remains till 22nd November 1583.
- The same year he begins to hear confessions.
- He begins conferences in his room; soon adds another room as the number of his hearers increase. (MARCIANO, vol. i. lib. i. p. 2.)
- 1551 or 52. Persecution by Teccosi and others which lasts two years.
1554. At S. John Lateran, St. Philip desires his companions to pray for a Jew.
- Cures Prospero Crivelli and Domenico Saraceni.
1555. Grievous sickness.
1556. Cures Giovanni Battista Modio.
1557. Thinks of going to the Indies.

xxii CHRONOLOGY OF ST. PHILIP'S LIFE

- A. D.  
1558. Assists Gabriello Tana in his last illness.  
Oratory constructed over the aisle of the church of S. Girolamo.  
Prediction concerning Francesco and Giovan Battista Saraceni.
1559. The Pope's vicar forbids the visits to the Seven churches; stops the exercises at the Oratory for a fortnight; and deprives St. Philip of his faculties.  
Ecstasy at the Minerva.  
The Saint's father dies at Florence, 11th October. (BACCI.)  
St. Philip weeps at the clothing of Francesco Basso.
1560. St. Philip assists F. Enrico Pietra in establishing the Congregation of the Fathers of Christian doctrine at S. Agata in Trastevere; at the house of these fathers there is a room in which the Saint sometimes slept. (*Breve notizia di Compagni del P. Cacciaguerra*, 8vo, Roma, 1712, pp. 22, 23.)
1561. Sebastian, the musician, dies in St. Philip's arms.
1562. Dangerous sickness.  
Death of Giovanni Battista Salviati.
1564. The Saint accepts the government of S. Giovanni de' Fiorentini. The Congregation of the Oratory begun there; the fathers go three times a day to S. Girolamo for the sermons and exercises.
1565. Pope Pius IV. dies in the arms of SS. Philip and Charles. (MARCIANO, vol. i. lib. ii. p. 167.)
1566. *January*. Predicts the election of St. Pius V.
1567. Another persecution.
1570. The sermons at the Oratory delated to St. Pius V.
1571. St. Philip's friendship begins with F. Agostino Adorno, founder of the Clerks Minor; when the Saint left S. Girolamo in 1583, F. Adorno occupied his rooms there. (MARANGONI, *Vita Cacciaguerra*, 8vo, Roma, 1712, p. 67.)

## CHRONOLOGY OF ST. PHILIP'S LIFE xxiii

- A.D.
1571. Vision of the death of Animuccia.
1572. Restores Baronius to health.  
 Predicts the election of Gregory XIII. (BACCI.)
1574. The Florentines construct an Oratory at S. Giovanni, and the exercises are removed thither.
1575. The Saint obtains the church of Santa Maria in Vallicella. The Congregation erected there by Gregory XIII. (date of bull, July 15th).  
 First stone of new church laid by Cardinal Alessandro de' Medici, 17th September.
1576. St. Philip sees the Madonna support roof of the church.  
 Four Fathers sent to Milan.
1577. Serious illness of the Saint.  
 3rd February. The new church opened; first Mass said by the Archbishop of Florence.  
 In April the sermons transferred to the Vallicella, and S. Giovanni quitted by the fathers.  
 8th May. St. Philip elected Provost. (MARCIANO, vol. i. lib. i. p. 51.)  
 The priest Visconti joins the oratory and gives his house, the stable of which is turned into an Oratory. (MARCIANO, p. 51.)
1578. Many join the Congregation. GALLONIO says, "*Cæterùm intra paucos annos aded crevit sociorum numerus, ut homines ad centum triginta, quamquàm non omnes confluentes admittebantur, Congregationi sese dediderint; at singulorum nomina ad unum recensere mihi in animo non est.*"  
 Church of the Vallicella exempted from the jurisdiction of S. Lorenzo in Damaso.
- 1578-1583. During these years, when St. Philip was ill, he sent his penitents and gave up his confessional to P. Vittorio dell' Ancisa. (*Breve notizia, &c. &c.*, p. 55.)



## xxiv CHRONOLOGY OF ST. PHILIP'S LIFE

- A.D.  
1579. St. Charles during his visit to Rome at this time institutes three sermons on Saturdays at the Confraternity of the Lombards, one of which was to be preached by a Father of the Oratory. St. Philip preached one day in the presence of St. Charles. (MARCIANO, vol. i. p. 9.)
1580. St. Philip writes to the Bishop of Fermo about the proposed foundation of an Oratory in that city.<sup>1</sup> (*Breve notizia, &c. &c.*, p. 87.)
- 1581 and 82. Convent of S. Elizabeth with some other houses purchased by Cardinal Cesi to enlarge the house of the Congregation.
- 1583, 16th March. The Miracle of Paolo de' Massimi.  
22nd November. St. Philip removes from S. Girolamo to the Vallicella.
1584. Converts Paleologo. (BACCI.)
1586. Dangerous illness in January.  
Oratory at Fermo founded; F. Ricci sent by S. Philip to Fermo several times; also sends a copy of the Rules at first observed by the Fathers of Rome.
1587. 19th June. The Saint declared *Præpositus perpetuus* of the Congregation.
1590. St. Philip appears to St. Catherine of Ricci.  
11th February. The relics of SS. Papias and Maurus translated.  
Accession of Urban VII.  
Predicts the election of Gregory XIV. (BACCI.)
- 1590 or 91. The Saint obtains from Gregory XIV. the chapel in his own room, and is dispensed from the Divine Office.
1591. Assists F. Niccolò Gigli at the hour of death.
1592. Dangerous illness.  
Clement VIII. baptizes the four Jewish converts.

<sup>1</sup> Respecting the foundation at Fermo, see "A Saint of the Oratory," by LADY AMABEL KERN.

## CHRONOLOGY OF ST. PHILIP'S LIFE xxv

- A. D.
1593. *23rd July.* He renounces his office of Perpetual Superior.  
Baronius elected Superior.
1594. Barsum, Archdeacon of Alexandria, comes to Rome.  
In May, illness and visit of our Blessed Lady.
1595. About Easter cures the gout of Clement VIII.—Easter Day was 26th March.  
*30th March.* The Saint taken ill ; ill during the whole of April.  
*7th April.* Speaks of his approaching death in a letter to P. Vittorio dell' Ancisa—this letter is kept at the *Stabilite* as a relic. (*Breve notizia, &c. &c.*, p. 61.)  
*1st May.* On Feast of SS. Philip and James he says Mass—then three days without Mass—then Mass daily.  
*12th May.* New attack—receives Viaticum from Cardinal Frederick Borromeo, and recovers.  
*23rd, 24th, and 25th May.* He says Mass.  
*25th May.* Feast of Corpus Domini.  
*26th May.* At 2 A.M. (6th hour of the night) goes to Heaven.  
*27th May.* Buried beneath the Choir, near the High Altar—soon after the coffin was placed in little Chapel above first arch on the Epistle side of Church.  
*2nd August.* First process begun. (BACCI.)
1596. Cardinal Cusano sends an offering to the tomb.  
Baronius and Tarugi created Cardinals. (CAPECELATRO.)
1598. *29th March.* The Pope gives leave for Mass to be said in his room. (BACCI.)
1599. Church consecrated by Cardinal of Florence (afterwards Leo XI.). (BACCI.)  
Offering of Mgr. Visconti, Bishop of Cervia, to the tomb.  
The Saint's body found incorrupt. (BACCI.)

## xxvi CHRONOLOGY OF ST. PHILIP'S LIFE

- A.D.
1600. 6th July. Nero del Nero begins the chapel in honour of the Saint. (BACCI.)
1602. 24th and 25th May. The Sacred Body translated to new chapel; first Mass said by Cardinal Tarugi. (BACCI.)
1615. May 25th. Blessed Philip is beatified by Paul V. (BACCI.)
1622. March 12th. Blessed Philip is canonized by Gregory XV. (BACCI.)
1639. The coffin is opened and the body is again found incorrupt. (BACCI.)
1669. Office of St. Philip made a double of *precept* for the whole Church by Clement IX.  
Alexander VIII. granted the proper Mass of the Saint to the whole church. (BACCI.)
1726. Benedict XIII. commanded the feast to be observed, as of *precept*, in Rome, and introduced the custom of holding a Papal Chapel in the Chiesa Nuova on the feast of the Saint. (BACCI.)
1855. Pius IX. grants a Special Mass for *la Festa del Miracolo* on March 16th at the Palazzo Massimo. (CAPECELATRO.)

## PREFACE

OF

### THE VENETIAN EDITOR OF THE LIFE OF ST. PHILIP NERI<sup>1</sup>

GENTLE READER,—Being anxious to reproduce the Book of the Life of St. Philip Neri, Founder of the Congregation of the Oratory, in order to promote the glory of the Saint, and your devotion towards him, I thought it would be an arduous and useless undertaking, if after so many celebrated authors who have written the Life and sung the praises of this Holy Man, I tried to compose one, that might be called entirely new. The chief difficulty for me was to choose, among the various writers, the one most apt to help me in the task I had undertaken. The first to collect the admirable acts of St. Philip was F. Antonio Gallonio, a priest of his Congregation and trusted disciple, who five years after the happy death of the Saint, published in 1600 his life in Rome, under the form of annals. This life was written in Latin, with wonderful exactness, the main facts having been witnessed by the author himself, and for the rest relying on the sworn depositions of about three hundred persons. In the following year the same book

<sup>1</sup> *La Vita di S. Filippo Neri, scritta da P. PIETRO GIACOMO BACCI, illustrata ed accresciuta da un Prete della Congregazione di Venezia. [P. BIASUZZI.] Fol., Venezia, 1794.*

## xxviii PREFACE OF THE VENETIAN EDITOR

was published in Rome, in the vernacular, with some additions; and both editions were later reproduced; the first by itself at Mayence, and in the great work of the Bollandists (*Acta SS. Maii*, tom. vii. pp. 463–524), and the second at Naples and Benevento.

To the work of Gallonio, succeeded the one of Father Pietro Giacomo Bacci of the Roman Oratory, who minutely examined the Processes instituted for the canonization of the Saint, on which his work is entirely based. It was printed in the year 1622 by the Congregation, and dedicated to the Sovereign Pontiff Gregory XV. Don Gaetano Volpi, in his *Apologia per la Vita di S. Filippo Neri*, p. 44, printed at Padua in 1740, deplors that this dedication, placed in the first edition of Bacci, was omitted in the following ones through lack of good taste, and he has it printed again in full, and in order that such a document should not be wanting in the present edition, I thought it well to insert it here:—

“To His Holiness Pope Gregory XV., the Congregation of the Oratory;

“Being on the point of publishing, for the spiritual profit and consolation of many, the Life of St. Philip Neri, founder of the Congregation of the Oratory, based on facts gathered in the Processes instituted for his Canonization, there is every reason for this work to appear under the august protection of your Holiness. Besides all the trouble taken by your Holiness, whilst auditor of the Rota in order to start this Process, it is You who related the facts to Paul V. of glorious memory, thus inducing him to declare Philip among the Blessed, and to grant many favours, lately extended and increased by your Holiness, confiding

them besides to the Sacred Congregation of Rites, so that the canonization might be proceeded with. We therefore pray You kindly to accept this little testimony of our deep devotion, hoping, through God our Lord, that You who began this work, will shortly bring it to the end, which we all desire. Prostrate before You, we humbly kiss Your most holy feet."

The book of Bacci was received with universal approval, as is attested by the numerous editions that appeared in various towns of Italy, in the short space of some twenty years; and it is to be noted that six of these impressions were revised by the author himself, adding something new, or correcting any trifling mistakes which might have escaped his notice, as he was always continuing to read and study the Processes. Don Gaetano Volpi—page 43 of his *Apologia* quoted above—shows in what esteem he held Bacci's work: "Such a life, written with so much simplicity, historical dignity and straightforwardness, was often praised and set as an excellent model and example to be followed by all writers of the Lives of the Saints, by the well-known Abate Domenico Lazzarini, formerly Professor of the University of Padua."

Bacci, not satisfied with all this, which however was much in honour of his Holy Father, brought out in Rome, in 1645, an abridged edition of this same Life in Latin, which, however, after his death in 1656 was not reprinted, but many more a little later on were published in the Italian and in other European languages. In addition to these translations, the epitome of the Life, written by F. Gallonio, was first made by a certain Valentino Lenchzio, and published at Mayence in 1603; a second one was published anonymously at

### xxx PREFACE OF THE VENETIAN EDITOR

Venice in 1611, and finally a third one, by Mgr. Agostino Barbosa in 1621.

The following authors wrote also summaries of St. Philip's life and works: Mgr. André de Saussay, Bishop of Toul, who having annotated the Pope's bull for the canonization of the Saint, added it to his little work published under the title: *Epitome Vitae S. Philippi Nerii cum Bulla ejus Canonizationis, notis didacticis, selectis observationibus illustrata*. Don Giuseppe Ramirez of Valencia with immense labour composed his epitome entirely with words drawn from the Holy Scriptures, entitling it: *Via lactea, seu Vita candidissima S. Philippi Nerii*. Don Giovanni Marangoni entitled his work: *Ristretto della Vita, ed opere del S. P. Filippo Neri in San Girolamo della Carità*. Mgr. Pompeo Sarnelli, Bishop of Biseglia, in his *Specchio del Clero Secolare*; the erudite Don Giuseppe Maria Brocchi, in his *Vite de' Santi e Beati Fiorentini*; Giovanni Forti of the Congregation of the Oratory at Macerata, Niccolò Machirelli, and others, about twenty at least, whose names I omit for the sake of brevity. I must, however, point out, that besides the above-named epitomes all written in prose, there are three in Italian verse, in the form of short poems, written, the one by Giovanni Jacopo Ricci, the other by F. Antonio Glielmo, of the Congregation of the Oratory of Naples, and the other by Ignazio Bussoni. The following authors wrote about the Saint's acts more or less diffusely. F. Ludovicus Beltran Marco, of the Order of Preachers, wrote in Castilian, F. Antonio Vasquez, of the Clerks Minor, and a certain Miguel Antonio Francis de Urrotigoyti in Spanish; F. Herbertus Rosweyd, of the Society of Jesus, in Flemish;

and F. Girolamo Bernabei, of the Congregation of the Oratory, in Latin; which latter life has been reproduced by the Bollandists on the 26th May after the one of F. Gallonio. The learned F. Daniel Papebroch, S.J., a continuator of the Bollandists, in his introductory commentary *De S. Philippo Nerio* says that, to the Life written by F. Gallonio, a disciple of the Saint, he wished to add a rather long supplement, drawn from the one written by F. Bacci, both in Italian and Latin, as well as from the Processes. But F. Leandro Colloredo, at that time a priest of the Congregation of the Oratory at Rome, and later a Cardinal of the Holy Church, sent him all these writings on the part of the above-named Congregation, together with a new Life of the Saint written in Latin by F. Girolamo Bernabei, of the Roman Oratory, founded on the Processes, in order that his work might be inserted in the *Acta Sanctorum*, being desirous of meeting the wishes of F. Papebroch, who was well known to him, and held by him in high esteem. It is a pleasure to me to repeat the very words of F. Papebroch on this subject which are to be found in Sect. 6 of the above-mentioned commentary: *Talem ergo vitam (nempe a Bernabeo conscriptam) tantoque cum affectu praeeparatam, et communicatam nobis, nefas duxi vel unico verbo truncare, sed totam huic operi inserendam putavi. Superfluum etiam censui, post ejus modi Scriptoris tam accurati laborem, scrupulosius evolvere Processuum huc pariter missorum volumina: quid enim isthic a me sperarem inveniendum, quod ille non curaverit adnotare?* The devotion to the Saint, becoming more and more intense, in 1670 a twelfth edition was published in Rome of the Italian Life of Bacci under the direction of



## xxxii PREFACE OF THE VENETIAN EDITOR

F. Master Giacomo Ricci of the Order of Preachers, who spared no trouble to bring it to the highest degree of perfection, as is shown in the letter of dedication, to the Fathers of the Congregation of the Oratory, August 20, 1670: "I made bold to beg the Very Reverend F. Mariano Sozzini, who was at the time Superior, to be allowed to examine and read the Processes of the canonization, and the Congregation most graciously acceded to my request. I very diligently read and studied all I found there, and took advantage of certain details, besides those already published by the Rev. F. Giacomo Bacci in his Life, which are very copious and valuable on account of the spirit of God which pervades them, and which I here transmit to you," etc., enriching it, moreover, with brief Lives of some of the Saint's companions. But although it cannot be denied that he has too liberally laid hands on F. Bacci's work, correcting, changing, adding to, and, indeed, not always happily, his work not only reached the fourth edition, towards the end of the century in which it was published, but is still the most popular among devotees of St. Philip, notwithstanding two new and very detailed Lives written in Italian. One of these, by F. Marciano of the Oratory of Naples, published in 1693, and the other, by F. Sonzonio of the Oratory of Venice, which appeared there in 1727. The Life of St. Philip Neri, published by F. Marciano, which is drawn, as he says, from all those that wrote before him on this subject, forms the second book of the first volume of his *Memorie Historiche della Congregazione dell' Oratorio*. The Life written by F. Sonzonio was six years later followed by a second edition, published in Padua, with

additions, and an Index and a Bibliography of over eighty works, from which he affirms all the materials for his work were taken.

The writers of the Life of St. Philip being therefore so numerous, I endeavoured from the beginning to study attentively which of them it would be best to follow, so as to offer you more promptly and accurately the result of my work. It might seem that F. Sonzonio's work, being the most recent, should be the best, but, in truth, the sources from which he derives the greatest part of it do not always appear reliable, facts are often repeated, and his style is so high-flown as to become wearisome. With regard to F. Marciano, the bad taste so prevalent in literature in his time is so evident that I speedily arrived at the conclusion to leave that part of the *Memorie Historiche* in the obscurity in which it has been lying ever since the first edition appeared. In the work of Bernabei none of the qualities required in history are wanting, that is to say, clearness, precision, and truth; but being written in Latin, I decided to leave it on one side, not wishing to offer you a translation but an original work in the vernacular, now and then making use of it. For the same reason I was not satisfied with the Lives written by Vasquez, Ludovicus Beltran, Rosweyd, and Urroigoyti. I had therefore to choose between two Lives only, written in Italian, by Gallonio and Bacci. On comparing them, however, I soon found out that, whilst Gallonio writes with remarkable exactness, nevertheless, for two powerful reasons, his work was inferior to that of Bacci. The first is, that his method of writing the Life of the Saint under the form of annals would not have satisfied the very numerous readers who,

#### xxxiv PREFACE OF THE VENETIAN EDITOR

while desirous of reading virtuous actions of the Saints, like to have them all gathered up together, framed, as it were, in a clear and finished picture, and not to have to pick them out here and there, as if in a picture roughly outlined. The other is, that as Gallonio wrote, as I have already stated, in 1600, many circumstances of great importance are not to be found in his Life, and have been only revealed in the Processes that took place later. As I therefore found in Bacci's work all that can satisfy the devotion of the reader, it appeared to me that this was the Life I sought, merely adding to it what has been discovered since 1646, the date of its original publication, up to our own time, so as to make it as far as is possible perfect in every sense. F. Master Giacomo Ricci, of the Order of Preachers, a very learned man, and devoted to the Saint, was also desirous of publishing as perfect a Life as possible, but I must own that whoever examines it impartially will soon perceive that his additions are often out of place or quite superfluous, being frequently repetitions of what is to be found in Bacci, for the most part written hurriedly, and hence not submitted to the critical spirit which should be an integral part of all such undertakings. Nevertheless, all devotees of St. Philip must feel grateful to him, as his work, though not faultless, has given rise to new studies and comparisons, as in my case, enabling me thus to offer you the present Life, which will be more exact, and bring into greater veneration the holy Father. I must also own my deep obligations to this writer, who has helped me to approach, although I never can hope to reach it, the perfection to be aimed at. You will therefore find in this work, besides the text of F. Bacci, the most

notable illustrations and additions that are scattered in other authors, many other details most worthy of notice that I succeeded in extracting from authentic documents kept in the Florentine archives, and in those of Rome. In stating these facts I have endeavoured, without altering them, as Ricci has done at times, to preserve throughout the simplicity of diction in Bacci's Life in use at that epoch, and which to me appears adapted to a book of devotion of this kind. We have now, I think, said enough concerning this new edition of the Life of St. Philip.

With regard to the Letters placed by me at the end of this Life, I should say that they were all published in 1737 in Florence by Doctor Anton Maria Biscioni in his *Raccolta di Lettere di Santi e Beati Fiorentini*; and I have been able myself, after much research, to add as many more, which I have transcribed from the authentic originals. It is certain that St. Philip wrote many more letters than those placed here, as is attested by the book itself of his Life, in which are found fragments of others, the originals of which will probably be discovered in the course of time. There were, in some of them, words either faded through time or impossible to be deciphered owing to the numerous erasures made by the Saint himself, which were replaced by the copyist with dots [. . .]. I have not judged it right to endeavour to supply the missing words, as I wish you to be assured that all I offer is really the Saint's. You will, in reading them, remark a certain difference in style among them, but this must not lead you to suspect they do not all come from St. Philip. This difference arises from the fact that the Saint did not always write them with his own

## xxxvi PREFACE OF THE VENETIAN EDITOR

hand, at times dictating word by word, at others suggesting briefly to Gallonio or some one else what the contents of the letter should be. When written he used to read through the letter, making the necessary corrections, as can be ascertained in some authentic copies, but with regard to style, all he asked was that his sentiments should be well expressed.

Be therefore kind enough to accept the book I offer you, such as it is, and thus encourage me to publish the lives of the most illustrious sons of St. Philip, who flourished at all times in the Congregations of the Oratory. These lives, collected from many sources, I am now endeavouring to put together for the spiritual benefit of all. May it please God that the perusal of this book, devoutly undertaken and attentively continued, may bring forth in your mind the same admirable fruit which in former times the Life and Letters of the holy Father produced in such abundance.

## TABLE OF THE POPES

WHO REIGNED DURING ST. PHILIP'S LIFETIME

	YEAR OF ACCESSION
LEO X. . . . .	1513
ADRIAN VI. . . . .	1522
CLEMENT VII. . . . .	1523
PAUL III. . . . .	1534
JULIUS III. . . . .	1550
MARCELLUS II. . . . .	1555
PAUL IV. . . . .	1555
PIUS IV. . . . .	1559
ST. PIUS V. . . . .	1566
GREGORY XIII. . . . .	1572
SIXTUS V. . . . .	1585
URBAN VII. . . . .	1590
GREGORY XIV. . . . .	1590
INNOCENT IX. . . . .	1591
CLEMENT VIII. . . . .	1592



# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

## VOL. I

"GOOD PIPPO" . . . . . *to face title-page*

CHIESA NUOVA, EXTERIOR. . . . . *to face page 107*

This church, called Sta. Maria in Vallicella, and dedicated to our Blessed Lady and St. Gregory, was given by Pope Gregory XIII. to St. Philip, who had the old church pulled down and the present church built. The first stone was laid in 1575 by Alessandro de' Medici, Archbishop of Florence, afterwards Pope Leo XI.; the architects were Matteo da Castello and Lunghi, and for the façade, Rughesi: the adjoining house of the Congregation with the Oratory and Library were constructed by Borromini. No view can be given of the interior of the Oratory, as it was seized by the Italian Government after the invasion of 1870 and converted into a Law Court.

"SILENCE, THE FATHER IS SAYING MASS!" *to face page 148*

On account of his extraordinary devotion and frequent ecstasies Pope Gregory XIV. gave St. Philip leave to say Mass in a private Oratory. After the Agnus Dei the server put out the candles, lighted a lamp, and left the Saint alone with his Lord. A notice enjoining silence was hung on the door, and it was often two or three hours before the server was re-admitted. On the wall hangs the bell that was used at St. Philip's Mass, and also a crucifix that belonged to him, and which is always hung above the bed of any member of the Roman Oratory who has received the Last Sacraments.

CHIESA NUOVA, INTERIOR. . . . . *to face page 159*

Above the High Altar is the venerable picture of Sta. Maria della Vallicella which was in the old church, and it was above this picture that St. Philip saw our Blessed Lady supporting the roof. At the Gospel corner of the sanctuary rails, close to the entrance to the Saint's shrine, is Cardinal Baronius' Dedication of the Ecclesiastical Annals to St. Philip. Under the High Altar rest the bodies of the Holy Martyrs, SS. Papias and Maurus.



CORRIDOR LEADING TO ST. PHILIP'S ROOM. *to face page* 190

St. Philip's room is approached by a corridor richly decorated with a bust of the Saint over the door. Both the room of St. Philip and his private Oratory were originally higher up in the house, having a view across the Tiber to S. Onofrio, but when the house was rebuilt after a fire they were removed stone by stone to their present position, and so no longer have the same view.

ST. PHILIP'S ROOM . . . . . *to face page* 230

This room has been turned into a chapel and richly decorated. The handsome furniture and picture were not there in St. Philip's time. Above the altar is Guido Reni's original picture. On the Epistle side of the altar, enclosed in a cabinet, is the Saint's confessional, his bed being on the Gospel side. Relics of Martyrs are under the altar.

THE SACRISTY . . . . . *to face page* 385

The Sacristy constructed by the architect Marucelli is one of the finest in Rome, the roof is painted by Pietro da Cortona, and above the altar is a marble statue of St. Philip by Algardi. In the Sacristy are preserved many relics of the Saint, including his berretta, through which many miracles have been worked. An autograph letter of St. Francis de Sales is also kept there, while among the treasures is a beautiful chalice given by Pope Leo XIII. on the occasion of St. Philip's tercentenary.

# CONTENTS OF LIFE OF ST. PHILIP

## VOL. I

### BOOK I

#### THE ACTIONS OF PHILIP FROM HIS BIRTH TILL HE WENT TO LIVE AT SANTA MARIA IN VALLICELLA

CHAP.	PAGE
I. Birth and boyhood of Philip . . . . .	3
II. At sixteen he is sent to S. Germano, to learn business under his cousin . . . . .	9
III. He goes to Rome : his first fervour . . . . .	12
IV. Philip studies philosophy and theology . . . . .	15
V. He leaves his studies and gives himself wholly to spiritual exercises . . . . .	19
VI. Of the miraculous palpitation of his heart . . . . .	23
VII. The winning of souls, and the works of charity that he did in his youth . . . . .	30
VIII. Philip, with some others, begins the confraternity of the Santissima Trinità de' Pellegrini e de' Convalescenti . . . . .	35
IX. In obedience to his confessor he is ordained priest, and undertakes the charge of hearing confessions . . . . .	39
X. The beginning of the spiritual conversations in his room . . . . .	42
XI. Of some of his penitents who led holy lives . . . . .	45
XII. Of the greatness of Philip's zeal for the holy faith . . . . .	56
XIII. For the same end of converting unbelievers he commands Cesare Baronius to compose his ecclesiastical annals . . . . .	66
XIV. Of Philip's spiritual exercises at S. Girolamo della Carità . . . . .	78

CHAP.	PAGE
XV. The Florentines desire Philip to undertake the charge of their church of S. Giovanni at Rome . . .	86
XVI. Philip endures many persecutions because of the exercises . . . . .	94
XVII. Foundation of the Congregation of the Oratory in the church of Santa Maria in Vallicella . . .	105
XVIII. Philip leaves S. Girolamo, and goes to live with his disciples at the Vallicella . . . . .	112
XIX. Of the institute and government of the Congregation . . . . .	114
XX. Of the great obedience and reverence which his subjects paid to him . . . . .	125

## BOOK II

## OF HIS VIRTUES

I. Philip's love and devotion towards God . . . . .	141
II. Of Philip's devotion to our Blessed Lady, and to holy relics . . . . .	152
III. Philip communicates devotion to those who converse with him . . . . .	160
IV. Of Philip's gift of tears . . . . .	164
V. Of prayer . . . . .	171
VI. Of Philip's charity concerning the salvation of souls	183
VII. Philip's wonderful way of keeping young people from vice . . . . .	194
VIII. Of the great care which Philip took of his penitents when they were ill. . . . .	201
IX. Philip frees many from different temptations and troubles . . . . .	214
X. Philip delivers many from melancholy and scruples; —his singular power of giving consolation . . . . .	224
XI. Of Philip's alms . . . . .	232
XII. Of his compassion and tenderness of heart . . . . .	239
XIII. Of Philip's virginal purity. . . . .	244
XIV. Of Philip's abstinence . . . . .	256
XV. Of Philip's detachment from worldly goods . . . . .	261

## CONTENTS

xliii

CHAP.	PAGE
XVI. How far removed Philip was from every kind of ambition . . . . .	270
XVII. Of Philip's humility . . . . .	277
XVIII. Of Philip's mortification of himself . . . . .	290
XIX. Of the mortifications with which Philip exercised his spiritual children . . . . .	299
XX. Of Philip's patience . . . . .	313
XXI. Of Philip's perseverance and stability in well-doing .	326

### BOOK III

#### WHICH TREATS OF THE GIFTS WHICH GOD VOUCHSAFED TO HIM

I. Philip's raptures and ecstasies . . . . .	337
II. Philip's visions . . . . .	346
III. Philip's gift of prophecy.—He predicts the death of many persons . . . . .	362
IV. Philip predicts the recovery of many . . . . .	370
V. Other predictions of Philip . . . . .	376
VI. He prophesies to several that they will be Cardinals or Popes . . . . .	386



# BOOK I

THE ACTIONS OF PHILIP FROM HIS BIRTH  
TILL HE WENT TO LIVE AT SANTA MARIA  
IN VALLICELLA

VOL. 1.

A



# THE LIFE OF ST. PHILIP NERI

## CHAPTER I

### BIRTH AND BOYHOOD OF PHILIP

PHILIP was born in the city of Florence, in 1515, the third year of Leo the Tenth's pontificate, in the month of July, six hours after nightfall,<sup>1</sup> on the eve of St. Mary Magdalen. He was baptized in the Church of St. John the Baptist, as is customary in Florence, there being in fact no other baptismal font in the city. He received his grandfather's name, Philip, and to this was added Romolo, from the great devotion shown in those parts to the Saint of that name. His father, Francesco Neri, was a lawyer honourably known in his profession, and a great friend to the religious orders, especially to the Dominicans. His family came originally from Castelfranco, but had been long established in Florence, and had become allied with the chief noble families of the city, though in his time it had somewhat fallen into decay. His mother was named Lucrezia, and was the daughter of Antonio d'Andrea of Mosciano and Lena Soldi. The Soldi were one of the noble houses of Florence, and in the time of the republic had long held high offices in the state.

<sup>1</sup> According to the Italian reckoning this would be 2 A. M.



Francesco Neri had four children ; two girls, Caterina and Elisabetta, and two boys, Philip and Antonio, who died young. Philip was gifted with excellent talents, an amiable disposition, a winning appearance, and a wonderful power of attraction ; qualities which are usually found in those who are chosen to gain souls to God.

His parents gave him an excellent education. He went through the usual course of grammar, and succeeded so well as not only to keep up with his companions, but to astonish every one. He also went on to the course of rhetoric, and attained the greatest proficiency in it. His master in these studies was a certain Clemente, a man of no small skill and learning for those times.

Among the signs of future sanctity which Philip gave, while still a child, were a great reverence towards his elders, a singular modesty, and a more than usual attraction to the things of God. He was so obedient to his father, that he never caused him the least uneasiness, except once when he gave his sister Caterina a slight push, because, while he was reading the psalms with his other sister Elisabetta, she kept on interrupting them in their prayers. For this fault, if fault it really can be called, he was corrected by his father, and when he reflected upon it, he was so grieved that he shed many tears.

His attention to his mother's commands was equally exemplary. If she told him to stay in a particular place, nothing would induce him to move without her leave. After her death, his father married again, and Philip's dutifulness to his step-mother was such that she quite revered him, and loved him as tenderly

as if he had been her own child; so that when he left Florence she wept bitterly, and on her death-bed appeared to have him always before her, kept pronouncing his name, and declared that the very remembrance of him was a refreshment to her.

It was not only to his parents that Philip was respectful, but to all who were older than himself. With his equals and inferiors he was lighthearted, and so peaceable, that he seemed not to know how to be angry. He was never heard to speak evil of any one. His conduct with all ranks and ages was such as made him a universal favourite; and from the kindliness of his temper and the purity of his ways, his comrades nicknamed him *Good Pippo*. Nor was it only in the sight of men that he found favour, because of the goodness of his disposition; but he seemed to be under a special guardianship of Providence. One day, when he was about eight or nine years old, he saw an ass standing in the court-yard, and with a boy's thoughtlessness jumped upon its back. By some accident he and the beast both tumbled down a flight of steps into a cellar. He fell beneath the ass, and no part of his body was visible except an arm. A woman who witnessed the accident, ran to him and drew him from under the animal, not as she expected, killed or maimed, but safe and sound, without the least vestige of his fall. He often related this escape as one of the greatest favours the Majesty of God had conferred on him, and was continually returning Him thanks for it.

To his other good qualities Philip joined devotion and spirituality. His devotion too had a certain character of maturity about it. It did not consist in

those exhibitions of childish piety, which are laudable enough in themselves, such as dressing little altars and the like, but in praying, reciting psalms, and above all in eagerly listening to the word of God. He never spoke lightly, as boys will do, of becoming a priest or a monk, but concealed the wish of his heart, and began even from his childhood to shun all parade, of which he was ever an implacable enemy. This maturity of spirit, united with his childlike innocence, rendered him so dear to God that He appears to have granted him whatever he prayed for. When he had lost anything, he had recourse to prayer in order to find it. Thus, for instance, returning once from the Zecca to the Pitti palace, near which he was born and dwelt, he lost a gold necklace, but no sooner had he prayed than he found it; and another time he recovered by the same means some things which had dropped from under his arm a great way off.

At this time Philip frequented, among other churches, that of St. Mark, belonging to the Dominican Friars, from whom he received the first germs of spirituality. Hence afterwards, when he was at Rome, he used to say to some Fathers of that order who were accustomed to go to visit him: "All the good I have ever had from my youth up, I owe to your Fathers of St. Mark's at Florence;" and he named in particular F. Zenobio de' Medici, and F. Servanzio Mini, in evidence of whose virtues he used to relate the following amongst various other anecdotes. These two fathers had agreed together to hear each other's confessions every night before they went to matins, in order that they might say office with greater devotion; but the devil was envious of so much good, and one

night about two hours before the usual time, he knocked at the cell of Fra Zenobio, saying, "Up quickly, it is time." At these words the good father woke and got up, and went as usual into the Church, where he found the devil under the form of Fra Servanzio, walking up and down near the confessional. Believing it was really his companion, he knelt down to make his confession. The devil at the same time sat down as if to hear him, and at each fault which Fra Zenobio named, he cried out, "That is nothing, that is nothing." At last, the friar adding a fault which seemed to him of a somewhat more grave character, the devil still said "that is nothing;" when Fra Zenobio heard this form of speech he bethought himself a little, and suspecting, not without reason, some diabolical illusion, he at once made the sign of the holy cross, saying, "Perhaps you are a devil from hell," at which words the evil spirit was confounded and immediately disappeared.

Besides these two, with whom Philip was on terms of the greatest confidence and familiarity, he used to delight in hearing a famous preacher of those times, called F. Balduino of the order of the Umiliati, to whose holiness the saint used often to bear witness, declaring that, by the prayer of that good servant of God, the city of Florence was much helped in the disturbances and troubles of 1527, when the Duke of Bourbon made his passage through Italy.

From the religious exercises in which the holy youth thus engaged, there sprang up in him a great desire for all virtues, and in particular, with that covetousness characteristic of the saints, a wish to suffer for the love of Christ. So when he was attacked

by a violent fever in the sixteenth year of his age, he endured it with such patience and fortitude, that he even sought to conceal by silence, so far as he could, what he really suffered; but his step-mother's sister perceived it, and took pains to provide everything he wanted without his asking anything of her or of others. Nor did he display less firmness in a fire which happened in the house, and destroyed a great deal of property; for so remarkable was the calmness with which he took the matter, that many persons on that occasion predicted that he would be no ordinary man. Furthermore, by means of the same spiritual exercises, he acquired in addition to the love of virtue an actual aversion to those things which the world most esteems. On one occasion a paper was given him, containing a pedigree of his family; but instead of reading it, he tore it in pieces, not caring to be put down in that, but only in the Book of Eternal Life with the Just.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> From St. Philip's pedigree given in BROCCHI, *Vite de' Santi e Beati Fiorentini*, tom. i. p. 492 (2 vols. 4to, Firenze, 1742), it is clear that BACCI, *supra*, p. 4, is in error. Francesco, the father of the Saint, did not marry again. It was his step-mother, Benedetta Lenzi, who kept house for him, and was so attached to St. Philip.

## CHAPTER II

### AT SIXTEEN HE IS SENT TO SAN GERMANO, TO LEARN BUSINESS UNDER HIS COUSIN<sup>1</sup>

PHILIP's father, Francesco Neri, had a cousin named Romolo, an industrious man, who went from Florence into the kingdom of Naples, and for many years was in business at San Germano, a town at the foot of Monte Cassino, until at length he had amassed a fortune of more than 22,000 crowns, which in those times was a very considerable sum. Now when Philip was about sixteen years old, and advanced in human learning beyond the average, he was sent by his father to this cousin with the intent that, after learning business under him, he should be his heir, Romolo having no one nearer of kin, to whom he might leave his property. By order, therefore, of his father, he went to San Germano, where his cousin received him with much affection. Romolo soon discovered his good qualities, and before long determined to make him heir of all that he had. But God, who had destined him to greater things, thwarted this design: for when Philip had lived there for a short time, he felt himself inwardly spurred to embrace a more perfect state; and considering how riches, and especially trading, stand

<sup>1</sup> BACCI makes St. Philip go to San Germano at eighteen—but as he spent two years there, and went to Rome in 1533, that is, when still only eighteen, there is an obvious mistake. It has been corrected on the authority of Gallonio, one of the Saint's companions, who wrote the annals of his life five years after his death.

in the way of perfection, he began to think within himself of disposing otherwise of his life; and this thought was quickened by a devotion which he adopted in those parts.

Near to the harbour of Gaeta, not far from San Germano, there is a celebrated mountain which, according to a very ancient and common tradition, is one of those which were rent at our Saviour's death. It belongs to the Benedictine fathers of Monte Cassino, who have a church there dedicated to the Most Holy Trinity. This mountain is split from top to bottom by three huge fissures; and in the middle one, which is the largest, there is a little chapel on a rock, under the care of the monks, and on it a crucifix painted, which the sailors salute with their guns, as they pass beneath. Here Philip was in the habit of retiring for prayer and meditation on the Passion of his Lord. It was during these retirements that his disdain of earthly things grew on him by little and little, and he deliberated on the best means of putting in execution the design which he had conceived ever since his coming to San Germano, of leaving trade, and giving himself up to God in a state of life in which he could serve Him with less hindrance. When his cousin became aware of this, he endeavoured by every possible means to dissuade him from his purpose, proposing, what he had already designed, to make him heir of all his fortune. He bade him also think of his family, of which he was the last representative, and above all not to adopt lightly a resolution of such importance, adding that he was not conscious that anything had been wanting on his part to deserve at least gratitude from Philip, for the love and the acts of

## HE RENOUNCES EARTHLY RICHES 11

kindness which he had bestowed on him. Philip, at once putting away from himself all idea of earthly riches, answered with the modest brevity befitting such resolutions, that he never should forget his cousin's kindness, but that as to the rest, he was more pleased with his affection than with his advice.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> According to an ancient and unbroken tradition the house inhabited by St. Philip at San Germano still exists, and a room in it is called the Room of St. Philip. The Fathers of the Oratories of Rome and Naples were on the point of buying the house when the Revolution of 1860 broke out. See vol. i. p. 77 of CARDINAL CAPECELATRO'S "Life of St. Philip Neri" (English Translation), 2 vols. 8vo, London, 1882.



## CHAPTER III

### HE GOES TO ROME : HIS FIRST FERVOUR

PHILIP kept firmly to his intention, in spite of all the suggestions which were made to divert him from it. He had now resided two years in those parts, and in 1533, after mature consideration, he departed for Rome without even letting his father know; though in all other matters he had never so much as deliberated about anything without his knowledge. He acted in this way that he might not be turned from his good design of serving God in detachment from worldly things, and especially from riches. He carried nothing with him, that he might the more freely traffic for the merchandise of Heaven, to which he felt the Lord continually calling him. No sooner had he arrived at Rome, than an occasion offered itself of serving God as he desired; for the first place to which he bent his steps was the house of a Florentine gentleman named Galeotto Caccia, who seeing his modesty, and without considering his need, gave him a little room to live in, and a yearly allowance of corn, which Philip gave to the baker, going daily to get bread from him, as he wanted it. In order to return that gentleman's kindness, the saintly youth did not disdain to undertake the care of his two little boys, teaching them letters, and also virtuous ways, specially purity

and modesty, so that they became as it were two angels.

While he remained there, which was for many years, he led a life of great hardship and rigour, courting solitude as much as might be ; so that some have said that his was rather the life of a hermit than anything else. In food he was so abstemious that he seemed to take no thought either of eating or drinking. At first the people of the house were wont to reserve for him some part of their meals ; but he, not wishing for anything, took a roll, and retired below into the court-yard near the well ; there he ate his bread, and then drank some water, adding at times some few herbs or olives. In general he only ate once a day ; nay, he sometimes continued three entire days without taking food of any sort, and in later years, when a priest, he used on occasion to relate to his spiritual children, by way of stimulating them to mortification of the flesh, how that in his youth he was contented with ten sixpences a month.

As to his room, to say nothing of its extreme smallness, it was so poor, that there was nothing in it but a little bed, and some books ; and his clothes, linen or woollen, were hung on a rope which went across the room. It was no rare thing for him to make the floor his bed ; and the time which was not spent in sleep was given mostly to prayer, in which he had such a facility that he felt himself impelled to prayer rather than had need of any effort to excite himself to it. Indeed he sometimes spent entire nights in it. So unusual a way of life began by degrees to be spoken of, so that the rumour of it was not only spread over all Rome, but travelled as far as Florence. One of his

relations, hearing some one speak of his holy life, and of the wonders that he wrought, and having known him intimately from a child, said, "I do not wonder at this, for I remember very well what Philip was while he was yet a boy at Florence: when therefore you return to Rome, bid him pray to God for me."

## CHAPTER IV

### PHILIP STUDIES PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY

WHEN the youthful Philip had led this austere life for about two years, he determined, in order the better to understand heavenly things, and to taste them more perfectly, to add the study of philosophy and theology to what he had previously learned. First, therefore, he betook himself to philosophy, in which he profited so much that, according to the testimony of Alessandro Buzio, his fellow-student and afterwards an eminent philosopher, he was reckoned one of the most distinguished scholars at that time in the schools of Rome. His masters in philosophy were Cesare Jacomelli, who was afterwards bishop of Bencastro in Calabria, and Alphonso Ferro, both of them among the first lecturers of Rome in their day. He studied theology in the schools of the Augustinian monks under Alessio Stradella, afterwards bishop of Nepi, and laid a sufficient foundation therein to last throughout his life, so that in his old age he used to answer the deepest questions about the Holy Trinity, the angels, the Incarnation, and other matters, both theological and philosophical, with a memory as fresh as if he had but just studied them; many were greatly astonished to hear him speak with such solidity and depth about the various opinions on those subjects, and the Abate Maffa said of him, that he was "*magnus aestimator ingeniorum.*"

When he conversed with such of his spiritual children as were students, both for their advancement, and as a means of endearing himself to them, and so winning them to the service of God, he would enter into discussion with them, with as much ease as if he made those questions his daily study. Hence many young men delighted to frequent his rooms, where they found both a help and a stimulus in their studies.

At other times, though not often, he would discourse as occasion arose with the first theologians of the age, and in particular with Fra Ambrogio of Bagnuolo, who was afterwards made bishop of Nardò by St. Pius V., Fra Paolo Bernardini of Lucca, a man of the greatest learning and prudence, and others with whom he was on terms of familiarity. But with those with whom he had not the like intimacy, it was his way so to conceal himself that no one would have taken him for a man of education, especially as in familiar conversation his manner was concise and interrupted, and he did not use many words to develop his thoughts: yet when he chose he could discourse with a length and sequency, most striking to his hearers. Thus a prelate of great worth, having one day had a long conversation with him, said when he went away, "I thought that father was a simple and illiterate man, but I have found him great both in spirituality and in learning." The same happened to the Blessed Alessandro Sauli,<sup>1</sup> bishop of Pavia, a very holy and deeply read man. In conversation with Philip, he entered upon some theological questions, and was astonished at the learned answers which the Saint

<sup>1</sup> Superior General of the Clerks Regular known as Barnabites: died 1592, beatified 1742.

made, having hitherto esteemed him certainly as a saint, but not much of a scholar.

He was so ready and well-grounded in scholastic and doctrinal matters that when the discourses first began in San Girolamo della Carità, and in San Giovanni de' Fiorentini, where there were so few preachers that laymen, if spiritual and eloquent, were admitted to discourse, if by chance Philip heard any proposition stated, or any fact narrated, without fitting clearness and precision, he would immediately mount the pulpit himself, and expound it so judiciously as to show his own learning in the matter, even in spite of himself; so that many held his knowledge to be rather infused than acquired.

In theology he invariably followed the teaching of S. Thomas, to whom he had a special love and devotion, having the *Summa* almost always in his hand. He also constantly read and meditated upon the Holy Scriptures, and acquired a great readiness in applying them, of which he availed himself on occasion to the admiration and unspeakable edification of his hearers; and in all discussions he joined so much modesty to his acuteness, that he quite won the listeners over to him. When young, he took pleasure in writing poetry, both Latin and Italian, and in the latter he acquired such facility that he could compose off-hand; though, out of humility, he caused all his writings to be burned before he died. We have however remaining by chance, three sonnets of his, composed in youth, and written with his own hand.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Since BACCI's time two more sonnets have been found, and a rough copy of the one he speaks of is written on the back of a letter of Elisabetta, the sister of the Saint, dated 1581, which is preserved in its original state at the Vallicella.

While, however, Philip attended to his studies he did not neglect the things of the spirit. He continually visited the hospitals, and often, after the schools were closed, went to the portico of S. Peter's or of S. John Lateran, to instruct the poor in the holy faith, and spent the night in protracted prayer.

His fervour, far from diminishing, so increased that he was unable to attend to the theological lecture in the school of the Augustinian fathers because of a very devout crucifix which hung in the lecture hall; for every time he beheld it he was unable to restrain his sighs and tears. As in Florence he had been called Good Pippo, so in Rome he was commonly called Good Philip, a name by which Antonio Altoviti, archbishop of Florence, used to call him, and Cesare Jacomelli, his master in theology, and many others.

## CHAPTER V

### HE LEAVES HIS STUDIES AND GIVES HIMSELF WHOLLY TO SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

HE had now made sufficient advancement in learning, not for his own use only, but also for the edification of others; and he began to consider the apostle's words, *Non plus sapere quam oportet sapere, sed sapere ad sobrietatem.* (Rom. xii. 3.) Now therefore he laid his studies aside, and applied himself wholly to that science which is found in the crucifix. He gave himself up more than ever to prayer, knowing full well that that was the means of arriving at the perfection which he desired; whereas study is a great hindrance to perfection, prayer and study with equal jealousy demanding the whole man. First of all then he sold all his books, and gave the price away for the love of God. After this he gave himself up to prayer in such a way, that from that time forward he had nothing more at heart than perseverance in that exercise; and indeed, he sometimes continued in it forty hours at a time. While he prayed he felt the incentives of divine love multiply with such power within him, and kindle such a flame in his breast, that besides continually weeping and sighing, he was often obliged, in order to moderate the fire, to throw himself on the ground, to bare his breast, and use other means to relieve his spirit which was overpowered by the impetuosity of the flame.



Besides prayer, he studied how to macerate his flesh with every sort of mortification. He slept very little, and that mostly upon the bare earth, and disciplined himself nearly every day with some little chains of iron. He loved poverty as his dearest companion, avoided conversation, and all recreations, even blameless ones; in a word, he studied how to deprive himself of everything which could bring comfort or pleasure to his body. His life now became more retired than ever; indeed, he almost separated himself, like a hermit, from commerce with men. Above all things he gave himself to silence, which he prized and practised all his life long, so far as his institute allowed; and he made use of these means to enable himself to attend with greater fervour to the contemplation of divine things; in order to do so with greater recollection, he adopted the devotion of going every night to the Seven Churches, a distance of some twelve miles, and particularly to the Cemetery of San Callisto, generally called the Catacombs of S. Sebastian, and there he prayed for a long while together. He used to carry with him, either under his arm or in his hood, some devout book and a roll, on which he lived all day. It was in consequence of these practices that a Dominican Friar, named F. Francesco Cardone da Camerino, master of the novices in the convent of the Minerva, used to propose him to the novices as a model of penance, and often said to them, "Philip Neri is a great Saint, and, among other wonderful things, he has dwelt for ten years in the caves of S. Sebastian in the practice of penance, and has lived on bread and the roots of herbs." For although his regular habitation was in the house of Galeotto

Caccia, he mostly spent the night in the above-named places.

Whenever he found the churches shut, he used to remain under the porticoes, where he was often seen reading by the light of the moon, particularly at S. Mary Major's and S. Peter's; for he lived in such poverty, that he could not provide himself even with a piece of candle for a light. Besides the above-mentioned visits he went for some time to the four churches; for once, when speaking disparagingly of himself, he mentioned that he had gone for many years to the four basilicas of S. Peter, S. John Lateran, Holy Cross, and S. Mary Major, where he often occupied himself in instructing the poor who stay about the doors of those churches.

In these places Philip was often surprised by such an abundance of spiritual consolations, that, unable any longer to endure so great a fire of love, he was forced to cry out, "No more, Lord, no more," and throwing himself down, he used to roll upon the ground, not having strength to endure the vehement affection which he felt in his heart; and being thus so full of God, we need not wonder at his often saying, that to one who truly loved God, nothing was so really burdensome as life; for these words were often on his lips, "The true servants of God take life patiently, and death eagerly."

Notwithstanding, however, the great sensible consolations, with which the Lord favoured His servant, while he went about alone visiting these places by day and by night, yet very grievous also were the temptations by means of which the devil sought to divert him from his holy purpose.

One day as he was passing by the Coliseum, on his road to S. John Lateran, the devil, who never sleeps, presented himself to him under the appearance of a naked person, and excited most filthy thoughts in his imagination; but Philip, perceiving the device of the enemy, betook himself to his usual remedy of prayer, and remained conqueror in the fight. At other times, and especially in the dark, the evil spirit tried to terrify him. One night the Saint was near S. Sebastian's, at the place called Capo di Bove; he was alone and praying as he went along, which was his usual custom, when there appeared before him three demons of horrible shapes with the design of frightening him and hindering his devotions; but as he made game of them, and pursued his way without taking further notice of them, they disappeared. Philip had other combats and temptations, while he was leading this solitary life, but, like a good soldier of Christ, he came victorious out of them all.

## CHAPTER VI

### OF THE MIRACULOUS PALPITATION OF HIS HEART

PHILIP had been following this manner of life a long time, and was twenty-nine years old, when God gave him among other graces a miraculous palpitation of the heart, and a no less wonderful fracture of his ribs, which happened as follows. One day, a little before the feast of Whitsuntide, he was praying according to his wont to the Holy Ghost, for Whom he had such a devotion, that he daily poured out before Him most fervent prayers, imploring His gifts and graces, and when a priest, always said at mass, when the rubric allowed, the prayer '*Deus, cui omne cor patet.*' Now, while he was with the greatest earnestness asking of the Holy Ghost His gifts, there appeared to him a globe of fire, which entered into his mouth and lodged in his breast; and thereupon he was suddenly surprised by such a fire of love, that, unable to bear it, he threw himself on the ground, and, like one trying to cool himself, bared his breast, to temper in some measure the flame which he felt. When he had remained so for some time, and was a little recovered, he rose up full of an unwonted joy, and immediately all his body began to shake with a vehement tremour; and putting his hand to his bosom, he felt by the side of his heart a swelling about as big as a man's fist, but neither then

nor ever afterwards was it attended with the slightest pain or wound.

Whence this swelling proceeded, and what it was, was manifested after his death; for when his body was opened, it was found that the two highest of the five false ribs, that is the fourth and fifth, were completely broken and thrust outward, and the two sides standing wide apart, never having re-united nor returned to their proper position in all the fifty years which Philip lived after this miraculous event. It was at the same time that the palpitation of his heart commenced, which lasted all his life, though he was of a good constitution, a very lively temperament, and without the least tendency to melancholy. This palpitation only came on when he was performing some spiritual action, such as praying, saying mass, communicating, giving absolution, talking of heavenly things, and the like. The trembling which it caused was so vehement, that it seemed as if his heart would break out from his breast, and his chair, his bed, and sometimes the whole room, were shaken as if by an earthquake. On one occasion when he was in S. Peter's, kneeling upon a heavy plank, he made it shake as if it had been of no weight at all; and sometimes when he was lying upon the bed with his clothes on, his whole body bounded into the air. Whenever he pressed any of his spiritual children to his breast the beating of his heart against their head was so violent that they felt as if they received a smart blow, the pulsations resembling the strokes of a hammer, whilst they experienced in thus approaching him the greatest consolation and spiritual contentment, and many found themselves in the very act delivered from temptations.

While upon this matter, I must not omit to relate what is affirmed by Tiberio Ricciardelli, canon of S. Peter's, who served the Saint out of devotion for forty successive years. "While I was serving the father," he says, "there came upon me a temptation to impurity, and after I had told him of it, he said to me, 'Tiberio, come here, close to my breast;' and taking hold of me, he pressed me to his bosom, and I was not only freed at once from that particular temptation, but I never afterwards had any similar ones; and besides this, I had such an increase of devotion that it seemed as if I could do nothing but pray." Marcello Vitelleschi, canon of S. Mary Major's, another of Philip's spiritual children, declared that he had been repeatedly freed from temptations, especially those of the flesh, by the Saint's pressing him to his bosom; and whenever Philip knew that he was suffering from such temptations, without his saying a word to him, he used to take hold of his head and press it to him, and in no case was this done without immediate release from the temptation.

Philip felt besides such a heat in the region of the heart, that it sometimes extended over his whole body, and for all his age, thinness, and spare diet, in the coldest days of winter it was necessary, even in the middle of the night, to open the windows, to cool the bed, to fan him while in bed, and in various ways to moderate the great heat. Sometimes it quite burned his throat, and in all his medicines something cooling was generally mixed to relieve him. Cardinal Crescenzi,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Pietro Paolo Crescenzi's elevation to the Purple was foretold by St. Philip. It took place in 1611. He died 1645, and was buried in S. Maria in Vallicella.

one of his spiritual children, said that sometimes when he touched his hand, it burned as if the Saint was suffering from a raging fever; the same was also perceived by the Abate Giacomo, the Cardinal's brother, who was also tenderly beloved by Philip. Even in winter he almost always had his clothes open from his girdle upwards, and sometimes, when they told him to fasten them lest he should do himself some injury, he used to say he really could not because of the excessive heat which he felt. One day, at Rome, when a great quantity of snow had fallen, he was walking in the streets with his cassock unbuttoned; and when some of his penitents who were with him were hardly able to endure the cold, he laughed at them, and said that it was a shame for young men to feel cold when old men did not. We may here relate what is said to have happened in the time of Gregory XIII.<sup>1</sup> An order having been published that all confessors should wear the cotta in the confessional, the Saint went one day to the Pope with his doublet and cassock unbuttoned: his Holiness, marvelling very much, asked him the reason of it. "Why," said Philip, "I really cannot bear to keep my doublet buttoned, and yet your Holiness will have me wear a cotta besides." "No, no," replied the Pope, "we do not mean the order to apply to you; do as you please."

On account of the various effects of this palpitation on his system, the physicians who treated him often gave him remedies which he knew to be of no use; upon which he would say banteringly: "I pray God

<sup>1</sup> Ugo Boncompagni, born 1507, elected Pope 1572, famous for his reform of the Calendar, died 1585.

that these men may be able to understand my infirmity,” not choosing openly to discover that his infirmity was not natural, but caused by the love of God. Hence it was that in the fervours of the palpitation he was wont to say, “I am wounded with love;” at other times, considering himself as it were imprisoned by this love, he broke out into those verses:—

*Vorrei saper da voi com' ella è fatta  
Questa rete d'amor, che tanti ha preso.*

“I would know from you how that net of love is made which has taken so many.” At other times, unable to stand upon his feet, he was obliged to throw himself upon his bed, and languish there, so that his own people were accustomed to say, that those words of the Spouse were verified in him: “*Fulcite me floribus, stipate me malis, quia amore languo.*” When he was surprised by these affections, he used to tell his spiritual children about a Franciscan of Ara Cœli, named Brother Antony, a man of most holy life, who, though he did not macerate his body by any great austerities, was always crying out, “*Amore languo, amore languo,*” and languishing in this way through love of God, wasted slowly away till he died. But in his own case the Saint, to hide the real cause, pretended that all this was bodily infirmity, or a habit which he had contracted in his youth, and he almost always kept his handkerchief in his breast, on the side of his heart, in order that no one might perceive the swelling. He could not however deny, when speaking once to Francesco Zazzera, that for the most part his infirmities came from the palpitation.



The whole appears still more wonderful from the fact that the palpitation was in his case perfectly voluntary. He mentioned this to Cardinal Frederick Borromeo, his most intimate and devoted friend, telling him that it was in his power to stop the motion by a simple act of his will : but that in prayer he did not apply himself to do this, in order not to distract himself or keep thinking of it : and that the palpitation was so far from being painful, that it created a feeling of lightness and joyousness. This however did not always happen, nor did it exactly observe any general rules. The physicians who attended him in his illnesses, considered this palpitation miraculous and supernatural. This was the opinion of Alfonso Catanio, Domenico Saraceni, and others, and in support of it Andrea Cesalpino, Antonio Porto, Ridolfo Silvestri, Bernardino Castellani, and Angelo da Bagnarea, have written particular treatises on the palpitation, all agreeing that God had wrought in him that fracture of the ribs, so that the heart might not be injured in these violent beatings, and the surrounding parts be the more easily dilated, and the heart kept sufficiently cool.

When Philip had received this great and remarkable gift from God, he frequented the Seven Churches with still more ardour. There he was often surprised with such vehement devotion, that he could endure no more. One day in particular, unable to stand, he threw himself on the ground, and feeling himself actually dying through the fervour and impetuosity of his spirit, cried out vehemently, "I cannot bear so much, my God, I cannot bear so much, Lord ! for see, I am dying of it." From that hour God gradually mitigated his intense

sensible devotion, in order that his body might not become too much weakened by it, and permanently injured. Hence in his latter years he used to say, "I had more devotion when I was young, than I have now."

## CHAPTER VII

### THE WINNING OF SOULS, AND THE WORKS OF CHARITY THAT HE DID IN HIS YOUTH

PHILIP having thus lived a retired life for some time, and feeling himself more and more called by God to the conversion of souls, resolved to quit in part the enjoyment of solitude for which he had the greatest attraction, and to give himself up with greater fervour to the assistance of his neighbour. To this end he began about the year 1538 to go about the squares, shops, schools, and sometimes even the banks, talking with all sorts of persons in a most engaging way about spiritual things. Amongst others, he exhorted young men in the warehouses to serve God, saying, "Well! my brothers, when shall we begin to do good?" and thus with his natural sweetness and wonderful power of attraction, he gradually gained such influence over them as to win them to God.

Among many whom he brought to the service of God in these early times, was Enrico Pietra of Piacenza, who was employed at the warehouse of the Bettini, and who left business, became a priest, and, after an edifying life, died most holily at S. Girolamo della Carità. He it was who extended so much the company of Christian Doctrine, in which undertaking he was greatly aided by Philip's advice and assistance. Another of his converts was Teseo Raspa, who also

abandoned worldly business, and lived and died, giving great edification, at San Girolamo. Another was Giovanni Manzoli, from the warehouse of the Bon-signori; he remained a layman, but led a most holy and exemplary life. There were also many others whom we shall have occasion to mention in the following chapters.

But Philip's earnest longing after the salvation of others did not stop here. By a particular inspiration of God, he began to converse with men of the very worst lives; he went out every day in search of sinners, whose conversion he continually begged of God with abundant tears through the death of His divine Son; and sometimes he would even go and eat and drink in their company to win them the more easily; and so with his usual charity and dexterity he converted many to the Lord in a short time. But he avoided, especially at that time of his life, any attempt to convert vicious women; though afterwards God made him the means of bringing many even of them to penance, and to the religious state.

Among the conversions which he made, one of the most remarkable was that of Prospero Crivelli, a Milanese, and cashier of the principal bank of Rome. His soul was in such evil plight, as well because of illicit gains as of carnal sins, that his confessor, F. Giovanni Polanco, a Jesuit, refused him absolution. Horrified and disconsolate, he went to Philip, and telling him all that had happened, recommended himself most earnestly to his prayers, and begged of him with much importunity to obtain from God for him the grace to obey his confessor implicitly in everything, so that he might be able to receive absolution. Philip,

with his usual benignity and sweetness, first set about consoling him. After much conversation on spiritual matters, he saw that the cashier was moved to compunction, but had not the heart to abandon entirely his sinful habits. At length he dismissed him, saying, "Go, and I will pray for you, and I will pray so that without any further difficulty you shall separate yourself from this occasion of sin." And so it proved; for Prospero soon after gave up his sinful intimacy, confessed to F. Polanco, and received absolution; and then putting himself entirely under the care of Philip, became a spiritual man, and gave the most excellent example to those whom he had scandalized by his former immoral life. A great many who were converted by him to a good life, even before he was a priest and confessor, he sent into different religious orders; so that S. Ignatius, the founder of the Company of Jesus, who was at that time at Rome, used to call him "The Bell," meaning that as the bell calls people into Church, but stays itself in the belfry, so Philip sent others into religion, but stayed in the world himself. And in fact, S. Ignatius tried several times to draw him into the Society; but God had destined him to work in His vineyard with different means, and therefore he remained in the world. It is said, however, that he was the first who persuaded Italians to enter into the Society of Jesus.

It was commonly observed that those who did not profit by Philip's admonitions and reproofs came to an unfortunate end. Among others there was a certain philosopher, who led a bad life, and being reprovved by the Saint for some grave sin, paid no heed to the correction; but the unhappy man had hardly left the

Saint when he was assassinated. Another, who in spite of many entreaties from Philip, remained obstinate, was arrested and condemned to death about a week afterwards; though his punishment was subsequently, through favour, commuted to the galleys.

To this zeal which Philip had for the conversion of souls, he always joined the exercise of corporal works of mercy. He visited the sick in the hospitals more than ever; he served them in all their necessities, made their beds, swept the floor round them, gave them their meals, and procured them different kinds of food to refresh and cheer them. Above all, he exhorted them to patience; and when they were dying he made the commendation of their souls, continuing in attendance upon them entire days and nights; indeed he generally remained until they died, or some favourable change occurred in their disease.

This holy and praiseworthy exercise was not very common in those times; and it not only excited admiration in the spectators, but provoked others to imitate him. Many, not only ecclesiastics, but laymen and nobles, began to frequent the hospitals, and to serve the sick in all their necessities. Some time after, the excellent and holy order of the Ministers of the Sick was founded for the same object by S. Camillus of Lellis, one of the Saint's spiritual children.<sup>1</sup> Philip desiring one day to animate some of the fathers of that order to persevere in this holy work, said that he had himself, on one occasion, seen angels suggesting

<sup>1</sup> S. Camillus de Lellis, born 1549, died 1614, canonized by Benedict XIV. in 1746. See his *Life*, published in the Oratorian Series of "Lives of the Saints."

words to two of them who were commending the soul of a dying person, which circumstance is noted in the book of their chronicles; and Marcello de Mansis, a priest of that order, has made use of it in his book on assisting the dying, as a motive to incite the faithful to so pious a work.

## CHAPTER VIII

### PHILIP, WITH SOME OTHERS, BEGINS THE CONFRA- TERNITY OF THE SANTISSIMA TRINITÀ DE' PEL- LEGRINI E DE' CONVALESCENTI

WITH the same purpose of assisting his neighbours, on the 16th of August 1548, Philip, together with his confessor F. Persiano Rosa, a priest of holy life, who lived at S. Girolamo della Carità,<sup>1</sup> began the Confraternity of the Santissima Trinità de' Pellegrini e de' Convalescenti in the Church of S. Salvatore in Campo. In this place Philip had united together about fifteen companions, simple persons and poor, but full of fervour and devotion. Besides frequenting the sacraments, they had different spiritual exercises, and in particular familiar conversations one with another about the things of God, inflaming one another by words and example with the desire of Christian perfection. On the first Sunday of every month, and during Holy Week, they exposed the Blessed Sacrament for the forty hours' prayer, when Philip (sometimes at every hour, whether of the day or night) delivered discourses so full of unction, that besides exciting the hearers to works of mercy, they often

<sup>1</sup> S. Girolamo della Carità, according to an ancient tradition, was built on the site of the Palace of S. Paula, the illustrious penitent of S. Jerome. The Church was rebuilt in 1600, but the room still remains in which St. Philip was visited by St. Charles, St. Ignatius, and St. Felix of Cantalice. See ARMELLINI, *Le Chiese di Roma*, p. 283, 8vo, Roma, 1887.



recalled numbers of sinners to a good life. There was no heart so hard that it was not softened by his words. On one occasion he converted thirty dissolute youths by a single sermon; and many of his auditors said that to hear him was enough to convince any one of his sanctity, and of his earnest desire to gain souls to Christ. Indeed, some who went to hear him for the very purpose of making game of him, when they witnessed the strange sight of a layman preaching (which was a thing not commonly seen in those days) were captivated by his words and happily converted.

Ordinarily, Philip never went away during the whole time the devotion lasted, but watched for the most part through the whole night, calling one after the other those whose turn it was to assist, and when the hour was finished, giving them notice that it was time to give place to the others. For this purpose he kept a little bell near him, with which he gave the signal, saying, "Now, my brothers, away; the hour is finished; but the time to do good is not finished yet."

The object of this confraternity was then, as now, to receive for a few days the poor pilgrims who come daily to Rome, to visit the holy places. The institution of it took place in 1550, on occasion of the jubilee of Julius III. In the year of the jubilee an immense number of pilgrims are accustomed to flock to Rome; and as there was no particular place destined to receive them, Philip and his companions were moved with charity, and hired a small house, to which they conducted those who were poor among them, and provided them with all they stood in need of. But as the number augmented, and the charitable work went on, they were obliged to hire a larger house, where

they could lodge all who came to them with greater convenience.

It was a most edifying thing to see the great affection with which Philip and his companions served this great multitude night and day, providing them with food, making their beds, washing their feet, consoling them with kind words, and showing to all the most perfect charity. In consequence of this the confraternity got a great name that year, and the good odour of it was spread through all Christendom. Many were importunate to be admitted into the company, and a house was now taken and set apart on purpose for a hospital for poor pilgrims. The first brethren of the company, who all revered Philip as their father, were men poor as this world counts poverty, but rich in virtues. The cook even, who was the lowest among them, arrived at such perfection that he often went out at night, when it was clear, and fixing his eyes on the heavens, was sweetly absorbed in the contemplation of divine things; and another of the same house was so illuminated, that he foresaw the day and hour of his death; and calling to him his sister, who was named Margaret, he said, "On Friday at such an hour I shall die," which proved true in the event.

The brothers, however, were not content with this work of charity. They knew the extreme necessity of the poor convalescents when they first came out of the hospitals, and that from the weakness of their recent infirmity, they very often had relapses more dangerous than the original sickness. On this account they arranged that the same house, which served for the reception of poor pilgrims, should be used also for the assistance of the convalescents, who should be sup-

ported there and taken care of for a few days. But the confraternity increased so much in both the departments of its charity, that it was ultimately transferred from S. Salvatore in Campo to the church of S. Benedict, which was also in the Rione della Regola, where the Santissima Trinità di Ponte Sisto is at present. To what an extent this work finally reached, was seen clearly in the subsequent jubilees of the year 1575 under Gregory XIII. and 1600 under Clement VIII., at which last the number of pilgrims received amounted to 270,000. The lords and chief prelates of the court, and high-born ladies devoted themselves with the greatest charity, the former to the men and the latter to the women, and the Sovereign Pontiff himself, Clement VIII., frequently went there to wash their feet, say grace for them, serve them at table, and perform for them other offices of charity to the marvel and edification of all Christendom. The same was seen under Urban VIII. in 1625, under Innocent X. in 1650, and in all the subsequent jubilees, the work having been continued and even increased in later times under the patronage of Philip. It also became the occasion of many striking conversions of heretics, who having been entertained in the house in the character of pilgrims, were moved by the examples of charity and humility which they saw practised in it, abjured their errors and returned into the communion of the holy Church.

## CHAPTER IX

### IN OBEDIENCE TO HIS CONFESSOR HE IS ORDAINED PRIEST, AND UNDERTAKES THE CHARGE OF HEAR- ING CONFESSIONS

GOD had destined Philip for the conversion of souls; but it was impossible that he should accomplish this effectually, so long as he remained a layman. The Almighty, therefore, put it into the heart of F. Persiano Rosa, Philip's confessor, to persuade him to be ordained priest, and to undertake the charge of hearing confessions, that he might be the better able to win souls. When Philip first heard the proposal, he brought forward all manner of reasons to excuse himself from it, trying his best to prove to his confessor his inability and unfitness and especially urging the strong desire he had to serve God as a layman. But F. Persiano approved of his humility without admitting the validity of his excuses, and desired him to submit the matter entirely to his judgment; and Philip, who always thought the judgment of others better than his own, resigned himself entirely to the will of his confessor.

In the year 1551, while the Council of Trent was yet unfinished, Philip, who was then thirty-six years old, received on different days of the month of March the tonsure, the four minor orders, and the subdiaconate in the church of S. Tommaso in Parione.

In the same year, on Holy Saturday, he was ordained deacon in the usual church of S. John Lateran. His ordination as priest took place on the 23rd of May in the same year, in the same church of S. Tommaso in Parione, where he had received minor orders and the subdiaconate. He received all his orders from Giovanni Lunelli, bishop of Sebaste; the Vicar General of the Pope, at that time Julius III., being Philip Archinto, Bishop of Saluzzo.

When he was made priest he went to live at S. Girolamo della Carità, where a few priests of holy life were living together. These were Bonsignor Cacciaguerra of Siena, a man of repute, Persiano Rosa, whom we have already mentioned as Philip's confessor, Francesco Marsuppini of Arezzo, a man of great purity and simplicity of life, who was Philip's confessor after the death of Persiano, another Francesco no less virtuous, who was surnamed the Spaniard, and Pietro Spadari, also of Arezzo, who died in the odour of sanctity, and was the last of the priests of S. Girolamo who heard Philip's confessions. For after the death of the three we have named Philip confessed for a long time to F. John Baptist Perusco, of the Company of Jesus; and then till the end of his life to Cesare Baronius,<sup>1</sup> who, as we shall see, commended his departing soul when it went to Paradise. These servants of God lived in that house with great charity, without any kind of particular rule, their only rule being their love and reverence for one another. They had no superior, but observed only the order of seniority; and so they

<sup>1</sup> Cesare Baronio (1538-1607), cr. Card. 1596. See "Lives of the Companions of St. Philip Neri," 8vo, London, pp. 69-109, and the "Life of Cesare Baronio" by Lady Amabel Kerr, 8vo, London, 1898.

lived a tranquil and almost a heavenly life, rivalling each other in the service of the Church, and in assisting their neighbour. They did not take their meals in common, but each one by himself in his room; uniting in prayer and the frequentation of the Sacraments. This institute is still observed in that house to the great edification of all Rome. Here then Philip, having in the same year undertaken out of obedience the burden of hearing confessions, set himself more than ever to win souls and to convert sinners, with the greatest fruit both to himself and others.

## CHAPTER X

### THE BEGINNING OF THE SPIRITUAL CONVERSATIONS IN HIS ROOM

IN those times men lived very remissly in matters of devotion ; most men thought it enough to confess once or twice a year. Philip, regarding this as the cause of perdition to a great number of souls, applied himself industriously to induce people to frequent the Sacraments, and other spiritual exercises, but, above all, confession. He was one of the first, aided by the holy men already mentioned, who revived in Rome the practice of frequent confession and communion. In order to obtain this object of his desire more easily, he abandoned every other care, and gave himself entirely to hearing confessions. He got a number of penitents together ; and seeing the fruit which he obtained by this means, he was not content to employ the day in the confessional, but gave up a considerable part of the night to it as well. Before sunrise in the morning, he had generally confessed some forty persons in his own room ; and for their convenience he used to leave the key under the door of his apartment, that they might get in whenever they pleased. It was not only when in the retirement of his room that he was ready to confess all who came to him, but even if he was at prayer he broke off instantly, as we shall see later, and he would even rise from table and leave his

meal, if he knew that any one sought him for confession. When the church was opened at daybreak, he went down there and entered the confessional, and never left it except to say mass, which he usually did about midday, or for some other cogent reason, always leaving word whither he was gone. If it happened that no penitents came, he remained near the confessional, reading, or saying the rosary, or reciting office; and sometimes he would wait for them walking up and down outside the door of the church, that he might be the more readily seen; so that any one could find him with the greatest ease at any hour. He had such a spiritual relish in hearing confessions, that he said himself, "It is the greatest pleasure to me merely to sit in the confessional," so that he never gave up hearing confessions for any infirmity which befell him, unless his physicians positively ordered it, and if any one through pity said to him: "Father, why do you fatigue yourself so?" he answered, "It is not fatigue, but rather a relief and recreation." This he did to keep up the devotion of his penitents, and not to expose them to the danger of growing tepid, or of falling back through the difficulty of finding him.

He was not content with having thus won a number of penitents, but, desiring to preserve them, he took care, like a good father, to invent spiritual exercises, by which they should not only maintain, but keep continually increasing their fervour, and advancing in spiritual things. For this end he arranged that every day after dinner, that being generally the most dangerous time, they should come to him in his room, and there, leaning or sitting on his little bed, he gathered them around him, and proposed to them after the



manner of a conference, some moral subject, such as the beauty of virtue, or the deformity of vice, or some consideration on the lives of the saints. At the conclusion he took up the discourse himself, and spoke with so much fervour that the usual palpitation of his heart came on, and made not only the bed, but sometimes the whole room shake, and many times his whole body was seen lifted up into the air.

In these conversations he made great use of the works of John Cassian, as being full of moral and useful instruction, and when a sufficient time had been spent in this sweet and fruitful conversation, they all went out together, either for a walk or to some church, and specially to the Minerva, where they assisted in choir at compline, and in summer at matins, which are then said in the evening, and in particular during the octave of Corpus Christi; indeed they not unfrequently went to the same church at night for matins, and assisted at them with much fervour and spiritual sweetness. Many gentlemen used to accompany him, and this practice lasted until the exercises of the Oratory began to take a regular form, first at S. Girolamo, then in S. Giovanni de' Fiorentini, and lastly in the Vallicella. There were at first about seven or eight persons who frequented these exercises, among whom were Simone Grazzini, a Florentine, Monte Zazzera, of the same place, Michele of Prato, two young goldsmiths, and one of the house of Massimi. But the number increased so much afterwards, that the room would not hold them, and the Saint took some others close by, and made, at his own expense, a place which would conveniently contain them all.

## CHAPTER XI

### OF SOME OF HIS PENITENTS, WHO LED HOLY LIVES

PHILIP attracted by this work many of the principal gentlemen of the court, who became afterwards men of wonderful virtue. Among these was Giovanni Battista Salviati, brother of Cardinal Antonio Maria Salviati,<sup>1</sup> a person of great distinction, both from the nobility of his own family, and his near relationship to Catherine de' Medici, Queen of France; but much more estimable for the goodness of his life, and the rare example of humility which he gave. He was assiduous in prayer, in works of mercy, and in the continual practice of mortification, in which the Saint exercised him daily. He was constant in attending the hospitals, where he served the sick in all their needs, however lowly and menial. One day he went to the hospital della Consolazione, and found there a sick man who had formerly been his servant. He wished, according to his custom, to make his bed for him, and asked him to get up that he might be able to do so; the sick man asked him why. "Why!" replied Giovanni Battista, "because I want to make your bed for you." The servant knew nothing of his master's change of life, and thinking he was making game of him, said, "O Signor Giovanni Battista, this is not a time to

<sup>1</sup> Antonio Maria, Cardinal Salviati, cr. Card. 1583, great-nephew of Pope Leo X., intimate friend and protector of St. Camillus de Lellis.

make game of poor servants; I pray you let me alone." Giovanni Battista answered: "I tell you I want to make your bed for you, and what I am doing is in earnest, and not to make game of you." The servant however persisted in thinking that he was being made game of; and partly also moved by the respect he felt for his old master, obstinately refused to let him make his bed. The contest between them lasted for a long time, but at length the charity and humility of the master got the better of the pertinacious obstinacy of the servant.

This gentleman attained at last such a degree of mortification that whereas before he dressed very showily, and was attended by a great number of servants, after he had become acquainted with the Saint, and had some experience of a spiritual life, he not only dressed plainly, but would not have any servants to follow him. Philip however bade him, out of consideration for others, dress as his equals did, though modestly, and be attended as men of his rank usually were. God rewarded these and his other virtues in the peace and happiness of his death; for when he had with exceeding devotion received the last Sacraments, and was told that the hour of his passage was come, full of joy, he lifted up his hands to heaven, and began singing, "*Lætatus sum in his, quæ dicta sunt mihi; in domum Domini ibimus,*" and shortly after breathed his last in Philip's arms.

The Saint had a long while before drawn Giovanni Battista's wife, Porzia de' Massimi, to a spiritual life, and had already led her to a high degree of perfection, when with her assistance he at last made the conquest of her husband. After his death she entered the

monastery of Santa Lucia at Florence, that she might be the better able to serve God; but finding the air injurious to her, she returned to Rome, and shut herself up in the monastery of St. Catherine of Siena in Monte Magnanapoli, built by herself, where she died as holily as she had lived.

Together with Giovanni Battista Salviati was Francesco Maria Tarugi,<sup>1</sup> of Montepulciano, a relative of Popes Julius III.<sup>2</sup> and Marcellus II.,<sup>3</sup> a man of brilliant talents, in high favour with the great because of his engaging manners, and considered one of the most distinguished men of the Court. He went one day to S. Girolamo della Carità to confess, on the occasion of a jubilee published by Paul IV.<sup>4</sup> When he had finished his confession, Philip took him into his room, and talked with him upon various topics. After this he induced him to make an hour of prayer with him, during which Tarugi, although he had never practised mental prayer before, felt such spiritual sweetness, that the hour passed away without his knowing how, so excessive was the interior delight which he experienced. He came again at different times; and seeing the Saint sometimes raised from the ground at prayer, he formed a still higher opinion of him, and was inflamed with an earnest desire to change his life. There were, however, some impediments at the time, which seemed to make it necessary for him to defer the change he

<sup>1</sup> Francesco Maria Tarugi (1525-1608), nephew of Pope Julius III., cr. Archbishop of Avignon, 1593; Card. 1596. See "Lives of the Companions of St. Philip Neri," 8vo, London, pp. 9-69.

<sup>2</sup> Pope Julius III. (1487-1555), Giovanni Maria Ciocchi del Monte, elected Pope 1550.

<sup>3</sup> Pope Marcellus II. (1501-55), Marcello Cervini, elected Pope 1555.

<sup>4</sup> Pope Paul IV. (1476-1559). Giampietro Carafa, elected Pope 1555.

wished, and he made a minute statement of them to Philip. The Saint answered, "Do not be afraid; the hindrances will cease before a month is over;" and so it proved. Tarugi therefore returned to him at the end of that time, and made a general confession, during which Philip discovered to him his sins and secret thoughts. This circumstance kindled in him such an affection for the Saint, that he cared no longer for court or world, and gave himself up completely into Philip's hands, and that with such ready obedience, that the Saint did what he pleased with him, and afterwards made great use of him in winning souls.

So great was the fervour of Tarugi, that he soon had more need of the bit than of the spur. He had such resignation to the will of God, that for the fifty years or more that he lived after his conversion, he never in good or evil, as he himself often declared, lost the interior peace he then acquired. He was most obedient to the Saint in all things, and such was the respect he felt for him, and the opinion he had of his sanctity, that after he was made cardinal, he boasted of having been Philip's novice for fifty years, implying that from his twenty-ninth year, when he gave himself into the Saint's hands, until the age of eighty-three to which he lived, he had no other idea of himself than that he was Philip's novice. He had an eminent gift of prayer and of tears; and his success as a preacher was such, that he was the admiration of the most eloquent men of his day and was called by Baronius in his Annals '*dux verbi.*' Clement VIII. made him Archbishop of Avignon, and afterwards Cardinal of holy Church. In his extreme old age he begged of the fathers to let him return to die in the

Congregation; and a few months afterwards he surrendered his holy soul to God in the year 1608, at the age of eighty-three years and eight months, and was buried in our church of Santa Maria in Vallicella.

Costanzo Tassone was another of the Saint's first spiritual children. He was nephew of Cardinal Pietro Bertani,<sup>1</sup> of Fano, and Majordomo of Cardinal Santa Fiora. He was so given up to the court, that it seemed quite impossible for him to break away from it. Nevertheless he applied himself to works of piety, and at length there was no exercise, however lowly or difficult, in which he did not more than willingly engage. He confessed and communicated several times in the week, and often daily. He went continually to the hospitals to serve the sick, and accepted every kind of mortification which the holy father put upon him. In obedience to Philip he was ordained priest, and said mass every morning. He was so completely detached from the good things and honours of the world, that he refused a rich benefice which was offered him. At length his piety gained him admission to the service of S. Charles at Milan; and there he persevered in his holy life until the end. He died at Rome, his death having been foreseen by the Saint, as we shall relate elsewhere.

One of the earliest of the Saint's children, and one of those most in his confidence, was Giovanni Battista Modio, of Santa Severina, in Calabria, a physician, and a man of great learning and piety. He was the author of some annotations on the poems of the B. Giacomone, and of an Italian treatise on the waters of the Tiber.

<sup>1</sup> Pietro, Cardinal Bertani (1501-58), native of Modena, cr. Card. 1537.

On one occasion, when he was suffering dreadfully from the stone without any prospect of relief, and every one considered him in the last extremity, Philip went to visit him according to his custom; and after having exhorted him to bear his cross manfully for the love of Christ, went out of the house and retired into a neighbouring church to pray for him, which he did with most earnest vehemence. At the first tear which Philip shed, Modio began to pass the stone, and in a short time recovered entirely; and attributing his recovery to the Saint's intercession, he gave himself completely into his hands. He was a very tender-hearted man, and singularly compassionate to the poor. He had also considerable talent in preaching, so that, although he was a layman, Philip made him relate the lives of the Saints in the Oratory, which he did to the great delight and profit of the hearers. After his death Philip appointed Antonio Fucci of Città di Castello to succeed him in this office of relating the lives of the Saints. He also was a physician and very learned, and what is of more importance, a very spiritual man, and he was one of those who wished to accompany the Saint to the Indies to shed his blood for the holy faith, as we shall see later.

Marcio Altieri,<sup>1</sup> a Roman noble, was also one of his spiritual children. Under the discipline of the Saint he arrived at such perfection and enjoyed such a savour of the greatness of God, that the holy Father used to say of him that, like another Moses, he could not talk of God for the abundance of his devotion. He had such tenderness towards the poor, that he hesitated

<sup>1</sup> Marcio Altieri, of a noble Roman family to which belonged Emilio, Cardinal Altieri, afterwards Pope Clement X. (1670-76).

not to strip himself in order to clothe others, and gave in alms even the coverlet of his bed, expecting from the Lord the promised reward.

To these may be added Matteo Stendardi, nephew of Paul IV., Bernardino Valle, of Como, maestro di casa to Cardinal Montepulciano, Fulvio Amodei, Giacomo Marmita, of whom we shall speak afterwards, Giovanni Antonio of Santa Severina, and Ludovico Parisi, who served the Saint out of devotion for more than thirty years; with others of the principal families of Italy, who were all his penitents, and mirrors of perfection in the court of Rome.

Besides these he had others of humbler condition, who were also men of most saintly lives. Among them was Stefano, a shoemaker of Rimini, who had been a soldier for a long time, and was full of enmities, and altogether given up to the things of this world. Stefano came to Rome, and by some good inspiration went one day to S. Girolamo to hear the sermons. Through reverence and respect for others he took one of the back seats; but Philip, without ever having seen or known him before, went to him and led him to the front. When the prayer was finished he showed him great affection, and so captivated him by his manner, that from that day Stefano went continually to the sermons and began to frequent the Sacraments. By this means he was delivered from his most obstinate and inveterate passions, and became a man of wonderful virtues. He was so given to works of charity, that although he was very poor, he took nothing from his weekly earnings but what was absolutely necessary, and gave the rest away for the love of God. He thought constantly of death and kept himself prepared for it



as if each day he was to die; but for all that he was never out of spirits or downcast, but always gay and cheerful. He was remarkable also for his obedience, and for his assiduity in prayer, in which he was greatly favoured by God, and he was seen one day in the church of the Santissima Trinità di Ponte Sisto suddenly surrounded by a resplendent light. Stefano persevered in these exercises twenty-three years, living in a small house by himself. His friends told him that he would die some day suddenly, without any one to assist him; but he answered that he put his confidence in the most holy Madonna, and was quite sure that she would not abandon him: and so it proved, for being assailed one night all on a sudden by his mortal sickness, he went out of his house and called his neighbours to assist him and to go for the parish priest, and then returning took to his bed, where he received the last Sacraments, and gave up his soul to God.

Francesco Maria, commonly called il Ferrarese, was another of Philip's spiritual children. He was a man of the greatest simplicity, and of such goodness and purity of life, that he sometimes heard the angels singing, and was physically sensible of the noisome odour of sin. He had also a most eminent gift of tears, and when he communicated, which was ordinarily every day, or heard any one speak of the things of God, and particularly of Paradise, he wept immoderately. He was so enamoured of suffering, that being one day in excessive agony from the stone, he prayed God to send him a still heavier infirmity; and he had no sooner said this than he recovered. He had a burning zeal for the salvation of others; and seeing a Jew one day, he was smitten with such compassion for his soul, that he

prayed every day for him for three years continuously, beseeching the Divine Majesty to give him the grace of conversion. His prayers were not in vain, for being one morning at S. Peter's, he saw most unexpectedly that very Jew go to receive holy baptism, and his heart so melted within him at the sight, that he immediately began to shed most abundant floods of tears.

Another time Francesco Maria Tarugi found him weeping bitterly, and being very urgent with him to tell him the cause, the good man (although an entirely uneducated person) answered, that he was thinking of those words which Christ said to His disciples, "When you have done all these things, say, we are unprofitable servants;"—"For," said he, "if the Apostles, after having done so many miracles and converted the world, were for all that to say, 'We are unprofitable servants,' what am I to say, who have done nothing? This is why I weep, and cannot restrain my tears." Another time, Tarugi found him in prayer, standing, and every now and then drawing back a little, making gestures of surprise. This having lasted some time, Tarugi asked him why he did so: he answered, "I am considering the greatness of God, and the more I consider it, the more it seems to grow before me, and its very immensity forces me to step backward, even corporally."

Philip had also for his penitent another servant of God, named Tommaso, a Sicilian, whom he led to such a height of perfection, that he came to look forward as an immense privilege to becoming some day sweeper of S. Peter's. This post he obtained according to his desire, and continued to sweep the church for many

years with the greatest diligence and delight. Indeed he never left it except when he went to the holy father to confession. At night he slept in his clothes, on the predella of one of the Seven Altars. The devil, always the enemy of humility and perseverance, endeavoured one night to terrify him into giving up his undertaking. While Tommaso was asleep, the malignant spirit made such a disturbance, that it seemed to the good man as if all the benches in the church were being thrown up into the air, and were falling down on the floor, broken in pieces. Jumping up, he ran to the lamp and lit a candle, but found all the benches quiet in their places. He then searched the church diligently, thinking there might be a robber lurking in it; and in his search beheld the demon behind one of the columns, under the appearance of a negro; he immediately went up to him boldly, and raised his hand to give him a blow, upon which the enemy disappeared, and the intrepid Tommaso went back to his place as if nothing had happened, and fell quietly asleep.

Another of Philip's penitents was Fra Ludovico of Spoleto. He was not really a friar, but was so called because he wore the habit of S. Francis. This servant of God was most poor in earthly goods, but richly endowed with every virtue, and of a life most singularly pure, in consequence of which the Saint set him to take charge of the girls of Santa Caterina de' Funari, and knowing his goodness, would never let him abandon the employment. Pietro Molinaro was also one of those who were most in Philip's confidence. Through the abundance of his tears he lost his sight, but God restored it to him again by miracle. There

were very many others of different trades and professions, who lived under the care and discipline of Philip, and died in the odour of sanctity; but for brevity's sake we must omit particular account of them, except as our narrative may from time to time lead us to make mention of them.

## CHAPTER XII

### OF THE GREATNESS OF PHILIP'S ZEAL FOR THE HOLY FAITH

PHILIP had thus created round about him a goodly school of spiritual men. In the beginning of the conferences and conversations in his room, they sometimes read the letters which came at that time to the Jesuit Fathers from the Indies. The Saint, considering how great the harvest in those countries was, and how few the labourers, began to think of going himself into those parts, to sow the seed of the holy faith, and to shed, if needs be, his blood for the love of Christ. He communicated this thought to some of his penitents, and among the rest to Francesco Maria Tarugi, Giovan Battista Modio, Antonio Fucci, and others, to the number of twenty. Some of them he caused to be ordained priests, so that they might be ready to start as soon as they had received the Pope's blessing. Philip, however, was not a man to come to any grave decision without prayer, counsel, and time. First of all, therefore, he prayed about it for a long while, and then consulted a Benedictine monk who lived at S. Paul's, a man of great weight both for his learning and for his spirituality. This monk referred him to Agostino Ghettini, a Cistercian father, who was then prior of the convent of SS. Vincent and Anastasius, at the Three Fountains.

Ghettini was a man eminent both for learning and sanctity, and had been dedicated to the religious state by his father and mother before he was born ; it being their pious custom to confess and communicate and offer each of their children to the service of God before they came into the world. He had the spirit of prophecy, and an ardent devotion to St. John the Evangelist, from whom he received many favours ; so that he once said in the presence of the monks, " My S. Giovanni has told me that I am to die on his feast, but he has not told me the year." A long while afterwards St. John appeared to him again while he was saying mass on Christmas day, and said to him, " You shall die on this feast of mine, which is at hand ;" and so it proved, for on the morning of St. John's day, when he had said mass, he betook himself to his bed, received extreme unction, and expired the same day.

To this holy man Philip confided his project, and begged for his advice. The good servant of God took time, and told him to come again for his answer. After some days Philip returned, and the monk, according to his promise, told him that St. John the Evangelist had appeared to him, and had said that " his Indies were to be in Rome, and that God wished to make use of him there." He added also that he had seen the waters of the Three Fountains of a blood colour, which, the apostle had revealed to him, signified a great tribulation coming upon Rome. Philip implicitly believed the words of the monk, and with complete tranquillity of mind resolved to attend to the gaining of souls in the city of Rome.

This did not, however, in any way cool the great zeal which he had for the propagation of the holy

faith, and what he could not do in the Indies, he did not fail to do to the utmost of his power in Rome. Whenever he saw a Jew, he felt so strong a desire for his conversion that at the mere sight he often broke forth into tears and sighs, and left no means untried for his conversion. He went one day to S. John Lateran with Prospero Crivelli, a Milanese gentleman, who took with him a Jew. When they entered the church and knelt down before the Blessed Sacrament, the Jew alone stood with his head covered and his back turned to the altar. Philip seeing this, said: "Listen to me, my good man: join me in this prayer: 'If Thou, Christ, art really God, inspire me to become a Christian.'" He answered that he could not make such a prayer as that, because it would be to doubt of his faith. Philip then turned to the bystanders, and said: "Pray to God for this man, for without doubt he will become a Christian;" and not long afterwards, through the prayers and assistance of the Saint, he was baptized.

On the vigil of S. Peter and S. Paul, Marcello Ferro, a priest, and one of his first spiritual children, found two young Jews under the portico of S. Peter's, and began to talk to them about the faith, and in particular about the glory of those holy apostles who had themselves been Jews. Prolonging the conversation, he at last got them to promise that they would go some day and speak to Philip at S. Girolamo. When they came to perform this promise, as soon as ever the Saint saw them he showed them so much affection, that for several months they came to him nearly every day. Some time, however, having elapsed without any visit from them, the Saint desired Marcello to find

the youths out. Marcello went to their house, and asked their mother what had become of her sons. She answered that one of them was lying very ill, almost at the point of death. Marcello expressed a great desire to see him, and God so disposing the mother's heart, she allowed him to go upstairs. There he found the Jew indeed in the greatest danger of death, and as he would not take any food, the mother begged Marcello to try to persuade him to eat something, as he might perhaps take it from his hands. Marcello readily assented, and the Jew as readily took all that he gave him; Marcello then watching for an occasion, whispered into his ear: "Father Philip desires to be remembered to you." At these words the invalid was full of joy, and Marcello at parting said: "Remember you have promised Father Philip that you will be a Christian." He answered: "I do remember it, and I intend to do so, if God spares my life." Marcello related the whole to the Saint, who said: "Do not be afraid; we will help him with our prayers, and he will be converted." The Jew got well, and returned to Philip together with his brother, and under the Saint's care they both became Christians.

He also converted to the faith a Jew, who belonged to one of the chief and wealthiest families among them. He was baptized at S. Peter's, but as his father, who remained a Jew, had frequent intercourse with him, Pope Gregory XIII. was afraid lest his faith should suffer injury, and told Philip that this intercourse was not pleasing to him. Philip told his Holiness that his reason for allowing it to go on was that he felt confident the father would be converted through the son. This happy event did actually take place, for the



Christian son induced his father to go to Philip, whose efficacious words soon overcame his objections, so that he became a Christian himself in a very short time. Many years afterwards, this man got away from the Jews his four young nephews, whose father was dead, and caused them to be catechized that they might embrace the holy faith. One day, after Philip had left S. Girolamo and was gone to the Vallicella, he took these nephews to the holy father. Philip, according to his custom, showed them great affection, but did not enter into any conversation about the faith. One evening, however, many days after, he begged them to recommend themselves to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that He would inspire them with a knowledge of the truth. He added that he had already made the same prayer, and that the next morning at mass he would pray for them, and do holy violence to God. Then he said to the bystanders: "To-morrow morning, at my mass, they will say, 'yes;'" and one of them afterwards confessed, when he was examined in the process, that in the morning he was constrained to say yes, because he seemed to hear a spirit saying, "Say yes." When the morning came they were more obstinate than ever; they argued with different people for several hours, and remained still more fixed in their own opinion. But it was observed that at the very time the holy father was saying mass, a sudden change came over them, and they consented to become Christians. Then those who were present remembered the words which the Saint had said the evening before, that he would pray for them in his mass and do violence to God. So firm did they remain in their determination, that neither the prayers and caresses of

their mother, nor the threats of their relations were able to shake them.

While these four youths were living in our Congregation with the fathers, in order to be catechized, one of them, the second in age, fell ill, and on the sixth day was so much worse that the fathers, fearing for his life, thought of baptizing him. But Philip went that same evening to visit him, and sending everybody out of the room, touched him on the forehead and breast, and all trembling with inward devotion as was his wont in prayer, prayed for him a long time, and then said: "I do not want you to die, lest the Jews should say that the Christians had killed you; and therefore, to-morrow morning, send to remind me to pray for you in my mass." Father Pietro Consolini who was present, hearing this, said to the youth: "There is no doubt of your getting well now, for this holy old man has done things of this kind before." During the night he was extremely ill, and Girolamo Cordella, the physician, having visited him in the morning, told the uncle to go and see his nephew, for that he was at the point of death. When the hour came at which the holy father was accustomed to say mass, Father Consolini went to ask the invalid if he wished him to go to Father Philip to remind him of what he had said the night before: he replied that he did, and the father went accordingly. As soon as ever the Saint had finished his mass, the sick man sat up in his bed as if he had never been ill at all, and his uncle coming in at the time found him without fever. After dinner the medical man returned, and feeling his pulse, crossed himself and said: "You have physicians at home I see, and yet you send out for others." In the street, as he was going away, he

met Giovan Battista Martelli, his fellow-countryman, and said to him: "A wonderful thing has befallen me to-day. This morning I visited a patient at the Vallicella, who was in danger of death; and I have just been there again and found him without fever, so that at first I doubted whether the fathers had not played me a trick, and put some one else into the sick man's bed." Martelli answered him: "O you may be sure Father Philip has cured him." The medical man rejoined, "This is a great miracle, and Philip is a great Saint." In the evening the holy father went to visit the invalid, and whispered to him: "My son, you certainly would have died, but I did not want it to be so, lest your mother should say we had caused your death." Two months after his recovery, he and his brothers were baptized on the feast of S. Simon and S. Jude, in S. John Lateran, by Pope Clement VIII.,<sup>1</sup> to the great joy and contentment of the Saint as well as of themselves. The eldest took the name of Alessandro, the next Agostino, the third Ippolito, and the last Clemente.

As soon as they were baptized, they began to be anxious for the conversion of their mother, and found means to have her placed in the house of Giulia Orsini, the Marchesa Rangona. They then asked the Saint what hopes he had of the success of this experiment; he replied, "That she would not be converted, and that it would not even be well for them if she embraced the faith then, but that she would do so at another time with greater fruit to herself and to them." So it proved in the event; for she was con-

<sup>1</sup> Pope Clement VIII. (1536-1605), Ippolito Aldobrandini, elected Pope 1592.

verted about five or six years after, and brought over with her twenty-four relations, which she would not have done had she been converted at the time her sons desired it.

Philip also converted many heretics, whose names we cannot mention for grave reasons. We shall only relate the conversion of one of them named Paleologus, as being among the most remarkable. This man had been imprisoned by order of the Holy Inquisition, as well for being an heresiarch, as for other offences of which he had been accused. Every possible means was used to convert him; but he continued obstinate, and nothing could induce him to abjure. At last he was condemned to death, and as an obstinate heretic, to be burnt alive. The Saint had already visited him, and tried to win him by gentle words and arguments, and had laboured with great affection for his conversion, when one morning he was told that they were leading him to punishment in the Campo di Fiore. Philip was then at S. Girolamo, and, as usual, in the confessional. He was moved with compassion at the news, and felt a burning desire for the salvation of a soul in so perilous a plight, and so near to certain reprobation. He immediately left the confessional, and went to meet the criminal in the Strada del Pellegrino. He threw himself into the crowd, boldly passed the guards, and full of zeal for the soul of the unhappy man, went up to him and embraced him, and with the greatest tenderness began in words most calculated to excite compunction, and full of devotion, to speak to him of the salvation of his soul, and to exhort him with greater charity and fervour than he had ever done before, to be converted. When they

were near the place of execution, but before they had reached the stake, Philip, with the authority which God gave him at the moment, commanded the officers to stop, and not to proceed with the execution. The respect and reverence which they had for him was such that they stopped immediately; and Philip, having in that short time turned the heart of the miserable man, induced him to mount a bench on the spot, and to make a public recantation of his error, to the great astonishment of the crowd who were assembled to witness the execution. He then immediately succeeded in getting him reconducted to prison, where, the more to soften his heart, he got very large alms assigned to him by Gregory XIII. in addition to the daily allowance of the Holy Office. He himself went almost every day to visit him, and to keep him to his good resolution. He always conversed with him on matters of devotion, such as were likely to breed compunction of heart. With the desire of overcoming the pride and self-sufficiency generally found in such persons, he gave him the lives of the Blessed John Colombini,<sup>1</sup> and the Blessed Giacomone<sup>2</sup> to read; saying that men of that sort are more often converted by simple things, and by the examples of the saints, than by much disputing on doctrinal questions. Paleologus himself said that he wished he had known Philip sooner, because he seemed to speak with Christian sincerity and according to the teaching of the Gospel. He did not however persevere long in his good dispositions, but began to waver again, and then returned

<sup>1</sup> Founder of the Order of the Gesuati at Siena in 1363.

<sup>2</sup> B. Giacomone de Todi, died 1306. Author of the *Stabat Mater* and other spiritual canticles.

in part to his old false opinions. Indeed the holy father had often said to his own people: "I never was overpleased with that man's conversion." Nevertheless by the spiritual helps which the Saint continually afforded him, and in particular by the prayers he made and the tears he shed to gain his soul, he brought him once more to repentance. About two years after this second conversion, he was beheaded as a relapsed heretic, but with good signs of contrition, Cesare Baronius and Giovan Francesco Bordini assisting him in his last moments by order of the Saint.

## CHAPTER XIII

FOR THE SAME END OF CONVERTING UNBELIEVERS  
HE COMMANDS CESARE BARONIUS TO COMPOSE HIS  
ECCLESIASTICAL ANNALS

PHILIP'S great zeal for the propagation of the faith was not confined to Rome. He sympathised with the travails of Holy Church; and seeing how much heretical sects multiplied every day in the northern parts of Europe, he took courage to oppose them to the utmost of his power, trusting in that Lord who uses weak things to confound the strong. By a singular inspiration of God, he thought of a method by which he could attack them from a distance. Having instituted (as we shall mention in its place) an Oratory, where several spiritual discourses were delivered every day, he determined to impose on one of those who delivered them, the task of relating the whole history of the Church from the beginning, in order that men might see clearly the true fortunes of Holy Church, her progress, and the truth concerning past ages, so that the falsehoods of the heretics might be exposed, and thus the simple might not be so easily misled, and the better informed might at least be inexcusable.

For this work he chose Cesare Baronius of Sora, a man of immense zeal, and a doctor of civil and canon law, who besides his learning was so full of charity and the bowels of mercy, that he not only gave to the poor the little money he had, but even his clothes and linen. During a scarcity he sold a very rich reliquary

## BARONIUS PUBLISHES THE ANNALS 67

of silver, and bought corn with the price of it, in order to supply the poor with bread. He was so detached from all desire of greatness, and had so little affection for the things which the world esteems, that he even tore up the certificate of his doctor's degree. On him, then, Philip imposed the task of publishing the history of the Church, after he had several times over related and during many years carefully arranged and revised it; and that principally to oppose the "Centuries" published by the enemies of the Holy Faith, and the opponents of the Holy Catholic Roman Church. This huge work Baronius after many vigils and labours happily accomplished. He himself, in the preface to the eighth volume of his Annals, assures us that we may rather attribute his work to Philip than to himself, declaring at great length that the holy father was the author of the Annals, and attributing the whole to the prayers of the Saint rather than to his own labours. This preface we have determined to give here, that every one may be able to read it, and see the truth of what we have stated.<sup>1</sup>

A THANKSGIVING  
TO THE BLESSED PHILIP NERI,  
FOUNDER OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE ORATORY,  
FOR THE  
ECCLESIASTICAL ANNALS OF CESARE BARONIUS,  
CARDINAL PRIEST OF THE HOLY ROMAN CHURCH,  
TITULAR OF SAINTS NEREUS AND ACHILLEUS,  
AND APOSTOLICAL LIBRARIAN.

"Up to this time it has not been possible for me to touch upon the first origin and progress of the Ecclesi-

<sup>1</sup> The preface is found in the Appendix to Mansi's Edition of the Annals, fol., Lucca, 1740, pp. 422-4.



astical Annals, except in such a way as to shed obscurity rather than light upon the subject. This was because he of whom I had to speak was alive, and was a determined enemy of his own praises. But now that he has gone to heaven, my pen can run more freely in recounting the benefits I have received from him. In truth, it is a joyful thing to preserve the memory of our ancestors, from whom, as from a fountain, innumerable graces and favours have flowed down to us; but it is profitable as well as joyful; because, fathers and saints as they are, they continually admonish us not to degenerate from their virtues, according to that saying of Holy Scripture, 'Look unto the rock whence you are hewn, and to the hole of the pit from which you are dug out; look unto Abraham your father, and to Sara that bore you.' But besides being useful and joyful, it is also necessary, if we would not be upbraided with shameful ingratitude in forgetting and passing over in silence those from whom we have received benefits.

"Holy Writ teaches us in many places that the prosperous fortunes of children are generally to be attributed to their fathers; particularly where it relates that the patriarch Jacob, in giving his benediction to his son Joseph, said these words: 'His bow rested upon the strong, and the bands of his arms and his hands were loosed, by the hands of the mighty one of Jacob: thence he came forth a pastor, the stone of Israel.'" Seeing then that Holy Scripture attributes all the prosperity of Joseph to the powerful hand of Jacob his father, who was not only far away from him, but had already bewailed him as dead; what shall I say of that father who, ever present with me and aiding

me in everything, has so many times begotten me with the apostolic spirit, and with the same spirit has from my boyhood up kept me in check, and preserved me from the slipperiness of those early years, so prone to evil, and brought into subjection to the divine laws the untamed colt of my youth, and set Jesus Christ to sit thereon ?

“Being, therefore, under so many obligations to him, I wish, as far as these Annals are concerned, that this my thanksgiving should always live and always speak, and I offer it to him, the author of every one of my undertakings, as a sign of eternal remembrance. For it is right, and a mark of a humble mind, to acknowledge that we have received everything from him by whom we have been benefited, as on the other hand it would be unfair to attribute it to our own exertions. For he who attributed to himself more than he ought, and said, ‘I have done this in the strength of my own hand, and in my wisdom I have planned it,’ soon heard the answer of God, ‘Shall the axe boast itself against him that cutteth with it, or the saw exalt itself against him by whom it is drawn?’ And close upon the threat the vengeance came; and the unhappy man was for this very reason cast down from his royal throne, and sent to dwell among the beasts.

“I therefore ingenuously confess of the blessed Father Philip that which Christ our Redeemer, the Eternal Wisdom, taught us mortals when He said to the apostle Philip, ‘My Father, who is in Me, does the works.’ Not that I glory in men rather than God, but to show that he from whom I have received so much, was co-operating with God; so that I may thus testify my gratitude to God and man at the same time.

For it was the blessed Philip who by divine inspiration commanded me to perform this work, like another Moses committing to the workmen the building of the Tabernacle, according to the model which he had seen on the Mount.

“I set myself then to this great undertaking, after repeated orders from him, very much against my own will, objecting and entirely distrusting any ability for such a work. I undertook it out of obedience to the will of God, and on this ground also he constantly urged me forward whenever, overpowered by my burden, I interrupted the work for a short time, and with sharp rebukes compelled me to resume my task immediately.

“Burning then with zeal, oh my Father (for it is to thee I would speak) burning, I say, with zeal for the cause of Holy Church, no sooner did thy mind, illuminated by God, and full, if I may so speak, of the prophetic spirit, behold those Centuries of Satan issue out of the gates of hell to the detriment of the Church, than thou didst rise up to go forth and combat in behalf of the people of God. But thou didst not set thyself to levy a multitude of troops, greater or even equal to the number of the enemy. Thou knewest that God chooseth the weak things of the world to confound the strong, and so thou didst select one of thine own sons, the least among his brethren, and of the meanest ability, to send alone and unarmed to do battle against the numerous and well-armed ranks of the enemy. Then, feigning a far other project, thou didst not at once send him into the spacious field, but to make trial of his strength, thou didst choose a narrow room, the Oratory of S. Girolamo, commanding

me to relate in the daily discourses the history of the Church. This I began in obedience to thee, and persevering happily for thirty years, I went through the entire history of the Church seven times.

“Thou wert continually by me, spurring me on with thy presence, and urging me forward with thy words, always a stern exactor (pardon me for saying so) of the daily task thou didst require of me, so that it seemed as if I had committed a sacrilege, if ever from time to time I turned aside to something else; for thou couldst not endure that I should swerve one hair's breadth from the undertaking. Often, I confess, I was half scandalised, and it seemed to me that thou wert dealing tyrannically with me; for I was taking the measure only of my own strength, and did not perceive that thou wert first treating of the whole matter silently with God. Not only was no companion given to me to help me, but, as it happened to the children of Israel in Egypt, the labour was increased and no straw given. Many other things were required of me; to the weighty task of the Annals were added the burdens of the cure of souls, preaching, the government of the house, and of many other occupations which were daily imposed upon me now by one and now by another. And so it seemed as if, in thus treating me or in letting others do so, thou wert desiring almost anything of me rather than the one thing which beyond all else thou wert aiming at.

“It seemed as if in this thou didst imitate Elias, who when he wished to overcome the priests of Baal by calling down fire from heaven to consume the victim, made them first of all drench it thrice with four vessels of water, that the power of God might be

more manifest. But on the other hand, while thou wert by the aid of thy prayers stretching out thy hand over the work, it seemed that thou didst imitate Eliseus, who laid his hand upon the hand of the king, and then made him by the shooting of the arrow the conqueror of all Syria. Thus didst thou act; thou didst join thy strong hand to my weak one, and change my blunt pen into an arrow of the Lord against the heretics. As I know this to be true, it is a pleasure to me to make public acknowledgment of it.

“Thou wert then in truth the combatant, although, according to thy custom, by the hand of another; for thou wert ever working wonders, yet striving not to appear wonderful thyself, ever taking care above all things not to be made much of, often covering thy wisdom with the mantle of folly, bearing always in mind the paradox of the apostle, ‘Whoso wisheth to be wise, let him become a fool.’ Even so thou wert not possessed with the vain rejoicing of the world, but like David, who feigned himself mad, thou wert continually hiding the gifts of the Holy Ghost with outward demonstrations of the contrary, knowing, as the apostle says, how both to abound and to suffer need. Thus mightest thou say with him, ‘If we exalt ourselves, we do it for the honour of God, and if we abase ourselves, we do it for your profit;’ and so, like Philip the Deacon, whose name thou bearest, thou wert, according as the season required, one while attending to the salvation of others, and another while, carried away by the vehemence of the Spirit, lifted on high in the contemplation of heavenly things.

“But this glory, which whilst alive thou didst hide in the treasury of Christ, He Himself did after thy

death most abundantly restore to thee; and when the vessel of clay was broken, the lamp which was concealed within presently appeared; and the hidden light once placed upon the candlestick of eternity, displayed itself by miracles to all the world. For then were made manifest the marvellous things which in thy lifetime thou didst hide, and countless wonders wrought by thee after death appeared as well. Thy sepulchre shines, though not yet adorned as it shall be—still, I say, it shines with tablets and silver votive offerings, bright testimonies of thy miracles, by which it glitters more splendidly than if it were encrusted with precious stones, and adorned with pyramids and obelisks from Egypt; and from day to day it becomes more glorious with the offerings brought by those who have received benefits from thee.

“ Give me a place then, O my brothers, for to you I turn, you who form so pious and noble a crown about his sepulchre, give me a place, that this my offering of thanks, though most unworthy of the benefits I have received from him, may yet remain for ever hung upon his tomb, hung there, yet, with the Annals, traversing the wide world as well. Let it be a column able to move and speak, and to proclaim in great characters who was the true inventor and architect of the Annals, in order that if men shall reap any fruit from reading them, they may give the principal thanks to him. Let this my protest, I say, be fixed upon his sepulchre, as an epitaph which never can be effaced; and would that I could abide there myself as a living tablet, for the pencil of his prayers to trace upon, until I become a perfect portrait of his sanctity!

“ Come then, O Father—for I speak to thee as if

thou wert present, because thou seest Him who is omnipresent—come and protect this work of thine; and that the victory may be attributed to thee, come, as Joab wrote to David, come and finish what remains of the battle, and by means of thy prayers send an army from heaven, and utterly discomfit the enemy, that we may sing with Debbora, ‘Heaven has fought for us, and the stars, standing still in their order, have warred against Sisera.’ And now look down on me thy son, to whom while on earth thou wert ever a protector, whom thou didst guard by thy vigilance, whom thou didst govern with thy counsel, with whom thou didst bear in thy patience; now from heaven where thou dwellest give me still stronger aid, and let thy perfect and consummate charity succour me still more. And grant me further, only in a greater degree as more needing it, what Gregory Nazianzen declared that he received from St. Basil, that is, to have him for his monitor and corrector even after death; so that still holding the reins of my life, thou mayest guide what remains of my tottering old age, that it stumble not; that thus when my labours are finished, I may attain at length to that blessed rest which thou enjoyest now in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to Whom in perfect unity be glory, praise, and honour for evermore. Amen.”

Such are the words of Baronius: and we may see from them how he himself attributes the Annals to Philip. Indeed the saint himself, a little before he died, called Baronius to him and said, “O Cesare, know that you ought to humble yourself, and acknowledge that your writings have not been composed by your own wisdom, but have all been the most evident gift

of God." This he repeated several times over, Baronius always replying that he acknowledged himself to owe all to his prayers.

Baronius had a proof of this in a vision. When he first began to preach in the Oratory, he almost always discoursed on terrifying subjects, such as death, hell, and judgment. When he had done this for some time, the Saint saw in spirit that he would discourse on Church History with much more fruit both to himself and others, and especially that he would thus establish a firm foundation on which to erect a barrier against heresy. He exhorted him therefore to give up those other subjects, and to begin relating the history of holy Church, in chronological order, year by year. As Baronius did not put this design in execution very readily, because of the great repugnance he felt for it, the Saint kept from time to time reminding him of it, until at last one day he gave him an express obedience to do it. This obedience appeared to Baronius excessively hard and repugnant to his natural turn of mind ; yet on the other hand he did not like to resist it ; so that he was in great distress of mind. But the Lord, to relieve him of this distress, and also the more to excite him to execute Philip's obedience, signified His will to him in the following manner.

He seemed one night in a dream to be talking with Onofrio Panvino,<sup>1</sup> who himself was at that time compiling a history of the Church ; and speaking to him about the obedience which Philip had laid upon him, he besought Onofrio with the greatest earnestness to

<sup>1</sup> Born 1529, entered the order of the Hermits of St. Augustine, died 1568 ; author of several works on History and Antiquities.



finish the work he had begun. While Baronius anxiously uttered these words, Onofrio seemed as if he did not wish to listen, and turned the other way. Baronius wishing to follow up the conversation, began to prove to him how it was best in every respect that he should compose the Annals; upon which he heard the voice of the holy father quite sensibly and distinctly saying, "Quiet yourself, Baronius, and do not weary yourself any longer with this discussion, for it is you, and not Onofrio, who has to write the history of the Church." When he heard this he felt clear about the will of God, and set himself to discourse upon ecclesiastical history; and having gone through it all once, from the birth of Christ to his own times, the Saint ordered him to begin afresh, and for the space of thirty years, as he himself affirms in the preface just mentioned, he narrated the whole seven times through in the Oratory, before he published the first volume of the Annals. With what success his undertaking was crowned the whole world is sufficiently aware. On the 5th of June, 1596, Baronius was made cardinal, under the title of Saints Nereus and Achilles, by Clement VIII. This dignity, as he himself affirms in several places of his Annals, and as appears in his life already printed, he only accepted through obedience, having done all he could to avoid it, and having long before refused three of the best bishoprics of Italy.

This good cardinal died worn out with labours, on the last day of June, 1607, at the age of sixty-nine, as had been revealed to him several years before. He was seized with his last illness at Frascati, and as the medical men said that there was some prospect of its

terminating fatally, he cried out, full of the ecclesiastical spirit, "Let us go to Rome; a Cardinal ought not to die out of the City;—*non decet Cardinalem mori in agro.*" He was buried in the church of Santa Maria in Vallicella, with an extraordinary concourse and devotion of the people.

It was for the same end of opposing the heretics, who deny the intercession of the saints, and the worship of images, that Philip ordered Baronius to make his Annotations on the Roman Martyrology; and the same motive induced Tommaso Bozio<sup>1</sup> to write his "De Signis Ecclesiæ Dei," and Antonio Gallonio<sup>2</sup> the Lives of the Saints, both of them being priests of our Congregation.

<sup>1</sup> Born 1549, entered the Oratory 1571, died 1610.

<sup>2</sup> Born 1556, entered the Oratory 1577, died 1605; author of the first "Life of St. Philip." For further details of lives of Bozio and Gallonio, see "Lives of the Companions of St. Philip Neri," pp. 125 and 159.

## CHAPTER XIV

### OF PHILIP'S SPIRITUAL EXERCISES AT S. GIROLAMO DELLA CARITÀ

PHILIP being now fixed in Rome, as we have already seen, and the number of his spiritual children constantly increasing, their former place of meeting, in spite of its having been enlarged, became too small to hold all those who flocked to the exercises. In the year 1558, therefore, the Saint obtained from the deputies of S. Girolamo della Carità one side of the church above the nave, on the right hand, and there fitted up an Oratory, and transferred to it the spiritual exercises which used to take place in his room, adding also the practice of an hour of prayer before daybreak on all great feasts. This Oratory still exists, although it is better furnished and more carefully kept than it was; and the fathers at S. Girolamo keep up there with great fruit mental prayer every day, and discourses on feast days.

Here then, every day after dinner, Philip and the others used to assemble to discourse on spiritual matters in the fashion of a conference. When the exercises were finished he used to take them to some open place for recreation; or if it was a feast day he would lead them, now to one church and now to another, to hear vespers, or compline, or a sermon, and in particular to hear Fra Vincenzo Erculano, after-

wards Bishop of Perugia, a most learned man, who was expounding the *Miserere* in the church of the Minerva to a great multitude of people. In this Oratory, after a little time, Philip began those familiar discourses, which are still given every day in our church, and also the mental prayer every evening; and he was the first who introduced into Rome the daily Word of God.

But to give the reader a more exact idea of the way and of the order in which they used to preach at that time, I will insert here what Baronius writes in the first volume of his Annals, when speaking of the reunions of the primitive Christians according to the form given by the Apostle in his Epistle to the Corinthians. He says as follows: "It is certainly by the Divine disposition that we have seen, in great part, renewed in our day in the city of Rome what the Apostle commanded to be done of old for the profit of the Church, in the method of discoursing of the things of God to the edification of the hearers. This has been the work of the Reverend Father Philip Neri of Florence, who like a skilful architect laid the foundation of it, and of the Reverend Father Francesco Maria Tarugi of Montepulciano, his scholar, who for the excellence of his preaching might well be called the captain of the Word of God. To the pains and industry of these two was primarily owing the arrangement, that every day those who were desirous of Christian perfection should come to the Oratory of S. Girolamo, from which the Congregation of the Oratory afterwards took its name, and there hold a pious and devout meeting in the following manner: after some time spent in mental prayer, one of the brothers read

a spiritual book, and in the middle of the reading, the father who superintended the whole discoursed upon what was read, explaining it with greater accuracy, enlarging upon it, and insinuating it into the hearts of the hearers. Sometimes he desired one of the brothers to give his opinion on the subject, and then the discourse proceeded in the form of a dialogue; and this exercise lasted an hour, to the great consolation of the audience. After this one of his own people, at his command, mounted to a seat raised a few steps above the rest, and without any adornment of language discoursed upon some approved lives of the saints, illustrating what he said by passages of Scripture, or sentences of the fathers. He was succeeded by another, in the same style, but on a different subject; and lastly came a third, who discoursed upon ecclesiastical history. Each of them was allowed only half-an-hour. When all this was finished, to the wonderful contentment as well as profit of the hearers, they sang some spiritual canticle, prayed again for a short time, and so the exercise finished. Things being arranged in this manner, and approved by the Pope's authority, it seemed as if the ancient apostolical and beautiful method of Christian assemblies was renewed. Good people applauded the practice, and did their best to propagate these pious exercises in different places." Such is the account which Baronius gives of the foundation and beginning of the Oratory.

Besides these exercises which the Saint introduced for ordinary days, he originated others for Feasts. In the morning after confession, they made their prayer until the time for mass. After mass they communicated, and he then sent them to different hospitals,

whither they went in edifying silence. He generally divided them into three companies, one of which he sent to St. John Lateran, another to the Madonna della Consolazione, and the third to Santo Spirito. Here they assisted the poor patients with deeds as well as words, both spiritually and bodily, taking them different things to comfort them. He sent there from thirty to forty of the most fervent every day, to the great edification of all who saw them. He used to say to those who went to serve the sick in the hospitals, or to do any other similar work of mercy, that it was not enough to render the service simply to the patient they were visiting, but that they must imagine the person they served to be Christ, and hold it for certain, that what they did for the sufferer they did for Christ Himself; and thus they would do it with more charity, and with greater profit to their souls.

Besides this, some of them on Saturday nights and the vigils of the principal feasts, used to return to the holy father at San Girolamo, and then go with him either to the church of the Minerva, belonging to the Dominican friars, or to S. Bonaventura, the church of the Capuchins, where they assisted at matins in choir with the friars, and spent the night in preparation for the holy communion of the morning, so that the choir of the friars was often full of seculars, his spiritual children. He often took there Animuccia,<sup>1</sup> Maestro di Cappella at St. Peter's, with other singers, and when

<sup>1</sup> Giovanni Animuccia, born end of 15th or beginning of 16th century. Maestro di Cappella from 1555 until his death in 1571; composer of the famous "Laudi," sung at the Oratory of St. Philip; hence he has been called "Father of the Oratorio." His brother Paolo was for two years Maestro di Cappella at the Lateran. See Grove's "Dictionary of Music," vol. i. pp. 68-9.

they came to lauds, they began singing. Philip himself for a long time went there every night, so that the sacristan of the Minerva knew his knock at the church door, and used to go immediately to let him in. Such was the love which those servants of God bore to the Saint, that they gave him keys of the convent, so that he could enter when he pleased; and besides this confidence and familiarity, both the Dominicans and Capuchins affiliated him to their orders.

Philip was not however contented with all this; but the more effectually to withdraw his penitents from the dangers, into which the greater number of men and particularly young men are wont to fall, he used several times in the year, and especially at certain more dangerous seasons, to go with them to the Seven Churches. This he did particularly during the Carnival and the days after Easter; but in his latter years he only went during the Carnival. At first he had but few companions, five and twenty or thirty at most; but very soon the number increased so much that even during his lifetime there were upwards of two thousand persons. All sorts of people were admitted except women; a great number of religious joined; very often twenty or five and twenty Capuchins went at a time; but most of all the Dominicans, who sometimes sent all their novices.

The order they observed in going, and which with some trifling variations is still in force, was this: the day being fixed, they went early in the morning to St. Peter's, and then to St. Paul's, in which latter place they united themselves all together, and went in regular order to the other churches. The time of their walk was spent partly in meditating upon some spiritual

consideration assigned them by the father who led them,—for they were divided into many classes, and to each class was assigned a leader to guide and instruct them,—partly in singing in two choirs some psalm, hymn, or spiritual canticle, and sometimes the litanies, and they had musicians with them the whole way. If any time was left after this, they talked one with another upon the things of God, doing their best to avoid all vain and useless conversation.

In each church except the two already mentioned, there was a short sermon either by Philip, or one of his people, or some religious. When they came to St. Sebastian's, for which S. Stefano Rotondo was afterwards substituted as being more convenient, mass was sung, and at its conclusion the greater part of them communicated, as is done at present in the church of Saints Nereus and Achilleus. They then went to the vineyard of the Massimi or the Crescenzi, or to the garden of the Mattei on the Celian,<sup>1</sup> to which last place they have always gone from the death of the Saint to this day, the family having with great kindness permitted them to do so. Here they sat down in order, and to each was given bread and wine in sufficient quantity, with an egg, a little cheese, and some fruit. While they were eating, there was either singing or instrumental music, partly for recreation and partly to keep the mind occupied in the divine praises. When dinner was over they pursued their journey to the other churches, and then returned home with great joy and spiritual fruit to their souls. Many who came at first out of curiosity, were so moved to compunction, that they were thoroughly converted, and gave themselves up to the frequentation of the

<sup>1</sup> The following inscription is to be seen in the garden of the Villa Mattei:—

Qui S. FILIPPO NERI  
Discorreva coi suoi Discepoli  
Delle Cose di Dio.



Sacraments and to a spiritual life, taking for their guide the holy father, and obeying him in everything.

At first the Saint always joined in this devotion, and was so anxious that all should turn out well and edifyingly, that the excessive fatigue he went through sometimes brought on a fever. In the latter years of his life, as well on account of his age as because the exercise was well understood and established, he remained at home, leaving the management of it to others. God was pleased to show, if not by miracles, at least by graces and particular favours, how acceptable this devotion was to Him. One year, Philip went with the usual crowd to make the pilgrimage; while they were between St. Paul's and St. Sebastian's there arose a tremendous storm, and those who were in the Saint's company, fearing lest they should get wet, wished to seek shelter; but he told them not to fear, for that they would not get wet. Some believed the Saint's words, whilst others, who did not, took to flight; and so it was, that those who followed him, although they were not very far from the others, did not catch a single drop of rain, whilst those who ran away got wet through.

Philip had not long established these holy and pious exercises with the design of maintaining the fervour of his spiritual children, and also of exciting devotion in those who witnessed the frequentation of the Sacraments, the visiting of the hospitals, the abundant preaching of the word of God, the pilgrimage to the Seven Churches, and other edifying things which were practised, when his institute began to give such pleasure, that many persons of learning and influence gave it the highest praise both by word of mouth and

in their writings; so that Giovanni de' Rossi, in a book which he wrote at that time, and dedicated to the Saint, addressed him in the following words: "Amongst all the wonderful things which I saw in Rome last year (1568), I took especial pleasure in beholding such a great multitude of devout and spiritual persons frequenting the church and Oratory of S. Girolamo della Carità. Amidst the monuments of antiquity, the superb palaces, and the courts of so many illustrious lords, it appeared to me that this exemplary exercise far surpassed the glory and the fame of all the remarkable things which were presented to my view. I was the more astonished, and at the same time consoled, to see continually the great concourse of men of the highest rank and of different nations, who came with such relish to hear the sermons and the word of the Lord God expounded to them by your Reverence, with a pure zeal for the Christian faith, for the salvation of their souls. From this exercise frequently springs up in many of your spiritual children the desire of abandoning the world, and serving our Lord Jesus Christ, as is seen in the conversion of numbers who are at this very time in cloistered monasteries, or in other religious congregations."

## CHAPTER XV

### THE FLORENTINES DESIRE PHILIP TO UNDERTAKE THE CHARGE OF THEIR CHURCH OF S. GIOVANNI AT ROME

THE Florentines, considering the great fruit which Philip obtained through these exercises, and with what prudence and dexterity he governed those who placed themselves under his direction, and knowing the integrity and sanctity of his life, determined to use every endeavour to induce him to undertake the charge of their church of S. Giovanni.<sup>1</sup> They had obtained from Leo X. in the year 1519, authority to establish in it a confraternity of ten priests, to attend to the good of souls and employ themselves in hearing confessions, preaching, teaching Christian doctrine, and other religious exercises, under the direction of one appointed by them as head over the rest, and whose duty it was to see that all was carried out with exactness and spiritual profit. In the year 1564, they fixed their eyes on Philip, desiring to impose this office on him, and accordingly sent a deputation to pray him, in the name of their countrymen, to accept the charge, offering to provide him with a habitation and everything

<sup>1</sup> The Church of S. GIOVANNI DE' FIORENTINI was built for his countrymen by Leo X. from the designs of Sansovino. The façade by Galilei was added by Clement XII. See ARMELLINI, *op. cit.* p. 275, 8vo, Roma, 1887; PIAZZA, *Evsevolgio Romano*, p. 125, 4to, Roma, 1698.

## CHURCH OF S. GIOVANNI DE' FIORENTINI 87

else that he might need. The Saint replied that he should like to think it over and pray about it, and if he understood it to be the will of God, he would not fail to comply with their wish. Some days afterwards they returned for his answer; he said that he felt the greatest repugnance and difficulty about it, for that he could not bring himself in any way to leave S. Girolamo. On receiving this answer, Mgr. Cirillo, Commendatore of Santo Spirito, Giovanni Battista Altoviti, and Pier Antonio Bandini, Florentine gentlemen of the highest rank, who had the management of the business, adopted the expedient of going to the Pope, at that time Pius IV., of happy memory, and getting him to interpose his authority. They obtained their request, and then returning to Philip, said that it was the will of his Holiness that he should undertake the government of their church. Philip then immediately accepted the charge with all submission, on condition, however, that he should not be obliged to leave S. Girolamo. To this condition they agreed and he accordingly took charge of S. Giovanni, whilst continuing at the same time to direct the exercises at S. Girolamo.

When he took S. Giovanni, he had three of his subjects ordained priests; one of them was Cesare Baronius, the second Giovan Francesco Bordini, a Roman, a man of great talent for preaching, who was first made Bishop of Caviglione,<sup>1</sup> and afterwards Archbishop of Avignon, where he died; and the third Alessandro Fedeli,<sup>2</sup> of Ripa Transona, a man of great

<sup>1</sup> Made Bishop of Cavaillon, in the Comté-Venaissin, France, in 1592, transferred to Avignon 1597, died 1609.

<sup>2</sup> Born 1529, entered the Oratory 1563, died 1596; see "Lives of the Companions of St. Philip," p. 109.

goodness and purity of life. These three he sent to live together in community at S. Giovanni de' Fiorentini, where Alessandro took with him his nephew, Germanico Fedeli, then a youth about sixteen years old. With these Philip joined, not as priests depending on the Oratory, but as two of the ten maintained there, as we have explained, by the Florentines, Giacomo Salorti of Majorca, and Giovanni Rausico, both excellent priests, to the latter of whom he committed the care of the parish. Not long after, he added to the number Francesco Maria Tarugi, of whom we have already spoken, and Angelo Velli,<sup>1</sup> of Palestrina, a man of truly angelic life and singular purity of conscience. He was the second successor of the Saint in the government of the Congregation, and ended his days in peace on the 10th of December, 1622, at the age of eighty-five.

One of Philip's chief thoughts on undertaking the government of the church and the priests attached to it, was to introduce among them an ecclesiastical community life. He saw the immense advantages which they might derive from such a manner of living, and drew up accordingly a few constitutions, which they immediately began to observe with universal satisfaction. They now applied themselves with great fervour to labour in their little vineyard. They went to S. Girolamo every morning to confess to Philip, and returned there again during the day to the sermons, either to hear them or to preach them, according to their turns. In the evening they went there a third

<sup>1</sup> Born 1537, entered the Oratory 1565, and died 1622, having witnessed the canonisation of St. Philip on the 12th March of that year. See "Lives of the Companions of St. Philip," p. 115.

time to the mental prayer, never failing, winter or summer, either on account of rain or any other outward hindrance, to appear at the accustomed exercises at S. Girolamo. As to the service of the house, they waited at table each in turn on his day, and for some time acted as cook week by week, and that with such readiness and good humour, that Cesare Baronius left written over the chimney-piece, "*Caesar Baronius coquus perpetuus.*" It very often happened that when some dignified personage went to confer with him on spiritual or other matters, he found him with his apron on, washing the porringers. For a long time Germanico Fedeli and Ottavio Paravicini,<sup>1</sup> a pupil of Baronius and afterwards Cardinal, youths of the same age, took it in turns to read at table week and week about. The reading, which was from Holy Scripture and from some spiritual book in the vernacular, lasted about two-thirds of the meal; the other third was spent in proposing some moral doubt or case of conscience, whichever they pleased. The questions were proposed both in the morning and evening, and each answered according to his own opinion. Afterwards, when the Congregation was founded at the Vallicella, they began to read three books, and to propose two doubts, as we shall explain more fully in its place. As to the service of the church, they all took part in sweeping it every Saturday; and this was the origin of the custom that on Saturdays, for the convenience of the church, the usual discourses are not held. On festivals some assisted at the confessional, and others gave communion. Besides this, mass was sung; and as there were so few, it very often happened that some

<sup>1</sup> Born 1552, created Cardinal 1591, died 1611.

of them had to leave the confessional to attend to the functions of the altar. For some years Baronius and Bordino preached in cotta from the pulpit on festivals, taking it in turns; the Saint making this concession to give satisfaction to the Florentines, who made a great point of it. After dinner they sang Vespers, and then went to meet the Saint either at the Minerva or the Rotonda, or some other place where he had told them beforehand that he intended to go; and there, sometimes to the number of three hundred, they had a spiritual conference, Philip or some one whom he named proposing the points, and calling first on one and then on another for answers.

From this arose the practice of going after Easter to the hill of Sant' Onofrio, an open place with a most beautiful view over the whole city of Rome, and during the great heats of summer, to some church within the inhabited part of the city; there, after singing some devout hymn, a short sermon is recited by a boy who has learned it by heart; after which some of the fathers deliver short discourses, interspersed and concluded with music. In winter, that is, from the 1st of November till Easter, in the evening after the usual mental prayer in the Oratory, the litanies are sung with the antiphon of our Lady proper to the season, then comes the sermon recited by a boy, and after that half-an-hour's discourse, with music before and after, these exercises being attended by a great number of people.

Such was the life which these first priests led at S. Giovanni de' Fiorentini. It lasted for ten years, and we have been anxious to give this minute account of

it, that it may be seen with what a spirit of humility those good priests lived together, although they were so eminent both for birth and learning that their merit raised them to the distinguished positions which they afterwards occupied in the Church of God. By the Saint's desire many young clerics, who were his penitents, and by degrees other ecclesiastics, were received into the house as boarders, and he placed them under the same rules as the rest, so far as the circumstances of each admitted, in order to make them more and more fervent in the service of God. When the ten years were over, the Florentines, considering the great inconvenience suffered by the fathers in going three times a day to S. Girolamo through the heat, the wet and the mud, urged the Saint most earnestly to transfer the exercises from S. Girolamo to S. Giovanni. Accordingly in 1574, the 2nd year of Gregory XIIIth's pontificate, and the 59th of Philip's age, on the 15th of April, in the Octave of Easter, the fathers left the Oratory of S. Girolamo, and began to give the sermons at S. Giovanni, in a more spacious Oratory built for the purpose by the Florentines. The multitude that assembled to hear the word of God increased very much, to the great edification of those who went there. Father Giovanni Giovenale Ancina,<sup>1</sup> priest of our Congregation, and afterwards bishop of Saluzzo, who died in the odour of sanctity and was declared Venerable, and whose life has been published, went to the exercises at the Oratory of S. Giovanni before he entered our Congregation; and he was so deeply impressed

<sup>1</sup> Born 1545, entered the Oratory 1578, Bishop of Saluzzo 1602, died 1604, beatified 1890. See "Life of B. Juvenal Ancina," edited by Rev. Fr. C. H. Bowden of the Oratory, 8vo, London, 1891.



both by the institute and by Philip's sanctity, that in a letter written from Rome on the 28th of May, 1576, to F. Giovanni Matteo;<sup>1</sup> his brother, who was in Piedmont, he speaks as follows: "For some time past I have been going to the Oratory of S. Giovanni de' Fiorentini, where they deliver every day most beautiful spiritual discourses on the Gospel, or on the virtues and vices, or ecclesiastical history, or the lives of the Saints. There are four or five who preach every day, and bishops, prelates, and other persons of distinction go to hear them. At the conclusion there is a little music to console and recreate the mind, which is fatigued by the preceding discourses. They have gone through the life of the glorious St. Francis and those of some of his first disciples, and of St. Antony of Padua. I assure you it is a most delightful exercise, and a most consoling and edifying thing; and I regret very much that neither you nor I knew of this noble and holy practice last year. You must know too that those who deliver the discourses are men of distinction, in holy orders, and of most exemplary and spiritual lives. Their superior is a certain Reverend Father Philip, an old man of sixty, but wonderful in many respects, and especially for holiness of life, and for his astonishing prudence and skill in inventing and promoting spiritual exercises; he was the author of that great work of charity which was done at the Trinità de' Pellegrini during the last jubilee. Fathers Toledo, Possevino,<sup>2</sup> and others report wonderful things of him. In fact, they say he is an oracle not only in Rome, but

<sup>1</sup> Born 1552, entered the Oratory 1578, died 1638. See *Lives of the two Ancina* in "Lives of the Companions of St. Philip," pp. 3 and 213.

<sup>2</sup> F.F. Toledo and Possevino, eminent members of the Society of Jesus.

in the distant parts of Italy, and in France and Spain, so that many come to him for counsel; in a word, he is another Ruysbroeck or Thomas à Kempis, or Tauler." Such are the words of Father Giovenale, from which we may gather how the fruit of the exercises went on increasing daily.

## CHAPTER XVI

### PHILIP ENDURES MANY PERSECUTIONS BECAUSE OF THE EXERCISES

THESE laudable exercises, which caused nothing but love and good feeling in pious men, excited the envy of some malicious men, and became a very hotbed of calumnies. At the very outset, when Philip introduced the conferences and spiritual discourses in his own room, which was about 1552, ill-natured persons in the same way began at first secretly, and then openly, to speak against the work and say all the evil against it that came into their heads. The chief of these was Vincenzo Teccosi, of Fabriano, a physician, and one of the deputies of S. Girolamo della Carità; he was joined by two apostate monks, who under the clerical habit lived in that house without being recognised, and at the instigation of Vincenzo, did all they could to make Philip leave S. Girolamo. They had the care of the sacristy, and sometimes when Philip went to say mass they would shut the door in his face; at other times they refused to give him vestments, or they gave him such as were old and torn, with insulting words. Sometimes they took the chalice or missal out of his hands, or hid them from him; at other times when he was ready they told him to unvest, or made him leave one altar just when he was about to begin, and go to another, or even

return into the sacristy, trusting by these and similar insults to drive him from S. Girolamo; nay, they sometimes went so far as to push him about; so that he said once to Marcello Ferro, "See what these men do to me; but let us pray to God for them."

Philip went on charitably dissembling all these injuries and affronts, not allowing himself to be in the least disturbed by them, often indeed making light of them and laughing about them, praying for their authors with continually increasing zeal, and behaving to them with the greatest kindness and humility. He never let any occasion slip of doing them a service, or speaking well of them; indeed when his own people begged him to leave that church and go to live elsewhere, he answered that he would not on any account fly from the cross which God sent him in that place. Whilst however he was doing his best to subdue their ignorant insolence by his patience, they were so far from being softened, that their ill-treatment increased in proportion to his gentleness. The good father, seeing that his efforts availed nothing, betook himself for comfort to that Lord who never fails His servants in their greatest needs. One morning when he was saying mass, he fixed his eyes upon the crucifix, and said, "O my good Jesus, why dost Thou not hear me? So long and with such importunity I have asked patience of Thee, why hast Thou not heard me?" Immediately he heard an interior voice saying to him, "Didst thou not ask patience of Me? Know then that I will give it thee; but it is My Will that thou shouldst gain it by this means." Philip, strengthened by this voice, endured from that time every kind of injury which they offered him with more joyful mien

and greater contentment; so that the malice of his persecutors was tired out sooner than his patience. Indeed he came at last not only to have no sensible feeling of these insults, but even to desire them; and when they or others ill-treated him, he either made no account of it, or did his best to excuse them. The Saint used to relate the story to his spiritual children by way of animating them to perseverance in prayer, saying that if they did not obtain what they asked at once, they should not on that account desist from their petitions.

About two years afterwards it happened that one of his persecutors met him in one of the passages of the house, and immediately began to load him with opprobrious epithets, and to put himself into such a passion with him, that the other apostate, who was present, considering the great and long-continued patience of Philip, was so completely overcome by his virtue, that, touched with compassion, he suddenly from his enemy became his defender, threw himself impetuously upon his companion, and seizing him by the throat, would have strangled him, but for the interference of the holy father. The result was that the other also began to reflect on the great wrong which he had done the servant of God, and calling to mind the religious order which he had left, he took Philip into his confidence, and by his advice returned to his order, publishing everywhere the sanctity of the holy father, and becoming his most devoted friend.

Even Vincenzo Teccosi was at last overcome by Philip's meekness, and repenting of his fault, went to him, and in the presence of several others prostrated himself before him and humbly begged his pardon.

He also became one of his spiritual children, giving himself up entirely into his hands, and following him continually; indeed he hardly ever allowed a day to pass without visiting him.

Philip's persecutions did not however end here. A still worse storm arose in 1559 against the pilgrimage to the Seven Churches. Some imputed this action of his to pride, and said it was hardly becoming in a man who made a profession of despising the world, to be drawing the eyes of all Rome upon himself. Others of lower condition, who saw that some expense was gone to in providing refreshments, and did not consider the number of persons nor the simplicity of the provisions, set the pilgrimage down as an idle merry-making. Others of a more subtle turn attacked it on political grounds, as though such a company of people might give rise to tumults and seditions, and some even added that Philip was spreading novel opinions and forming a party, and thus becoming a cause of scandal and sowing tares, and that the matter ought to be remedied forthwith. All this was related to Philip, who listened to it with the greatest tranquillity. He was not in the least disturbed by it, but left all to Providence. Some of the objectors were persons of consideration and led spiritual lives; and when he heard his people speaking ill of them, he excused them as much as he could, in order that his own spiritual children might not lose their esteem for them. Indeed, all detraction was so displeasing to the Saint, that he told F. Gallonio whenever he heard it, to throw himself on his knees before the detractors and say, "I accuse myself of speaking ill of such and such a person," as if he himself had done it; and by this

means those who were really guilty would more readily perceive their fault.

These rumours however increased, and at last came to the ear of the Pope's Vicar, who being misled by ill-natured information, summoned Philip before him, and rebuked him with great severity. "Are you not ashamed," said he, "you who make profession of despising the world, to collect together such a multitude of persons in order to court popular repute, and thus under pretence of sanctity to hunt for preferment?" And after bitterly reproving him with these and similar words, he commanded him to abstain from hearing confessions for a fortnight, not to continue the exercises without fresh leave, and not to go about with any company of persons, threatening him with imprisonment if he should disobey, and furthermore obliging him to give security for his appearance at the first summons. Philip very modestly replied, that as he had begun these exercises for the glory of God, so for His glory he would leave them off; that he should always prefer the injunctions of his superiors to his own plans; and that his only object in introducing the pilgrimage to the Seven Churches had been to recreate the minds of his penitents, and to keep them out of the way of the sins so commonly committed during Carnival time. The Vicar replied, "You are an ambitious man, and what you do, you do not for the glory of God, but to make yourself head of a party." When Philip heard this, he turned to a crucifix which was there, and said, "Lord, Thou knowest if what I do is to make myself head of a party, or for Thy service;" and then went away.

But Philip had always esteemed obedience above

everything else, especially obedience to ecclesiastical superiors, and therefore he forbade his disciples to accompany him. He told them to have patience, for that the world would find out the truth in time, and that meanwhile they were to pray; and to hinder them as much as he could from following him, on going out of the house, he told some to go to one place, and others to another, though his children, who could not bear to be away from him, used to step aside and wait, and when he had passed, follow him at a distance, and the more he forbade them, the more their desire to be with him increased. Philip having thus commended his cause to the Lord, and obtained the prayers of many servants of God, was in the Oratory one day with some of his people, when a priest appeared amongst them, whom they had never seen before and never saw afterwards. He was clothed in a coarse habit and girt with a cord, and said he had come on the part of some religious who had had a revelation about the opposition to the exercises of the Oratory, and that the fathers were to have the Forty-hours' prayer, from which great fruit would follow. Then going close to Francesco Maria Tarugi, he whispered secretly in his ear, "The persecution will soon end in the establishment and increase of the work;" and added, that those who were now opposed to it would soon become its supporters; that whoever persevered in attacking it would be severely punished by God; and that the prelate who was most forward in the persecution would be dead within fifteen days. And so it happened, for he perished miserably by a sudden death after he had been to the Pope to give him a statement of the matter.



It was necessary, however, for Philip to give an account to his superiors of the accusations brought against him, though in doing so, he would not call to his aid any worldly means, but only his innocence and prayer. He was continually saying to his followers, "This persecution is not for you but for me; God wishes to make me humble and patient; and be sure that as soon as I have gained from it the fruit which God intends, and am thoroughly mortified, the persecution will cease." He would not allow a single word to be spoken against the prelate who had been his principal opponent, and when one of his penitents went one day to confession, and wanted to remark upon the judgments of God with reference to his sudden death, the Saint instantly took the words out of his mouth, and said, "Hold your peace."

After some time Paul IV.,<sup>1</sup> who was then Pope, having heard the whole affair, and ascertained the innocence of Philip, and seeing that it was God who guided him in his actions, sent him, as a mark of his good will, two of the gilded candles which are burnt before his Holiness on the feast of the Purification, with a message to the effect that he gave him full leave to have the pilgrimage to the Seven Churches, to resume his exercises, and in all respects to go on as before. His Holiness further added, that he was sorry he could not go there in person, but begged Philip to pray for him. When those who were present heard this message delivered, they returned thanks to God; and soon after the fathers made the pilgrimage to the Seven Churches accompanied by an immense multitude, praising the Divine Goodness for the happy

<sup>1</sup> Giovanni Pietro Caraffa, born 1476, elected Pope 1555, died 1559.

termination of so serious a persecution, and for the consolation of being able once more to enjoy freely this spiritual recreation.

A few years later, in 1570, a still more vehement persecution arose. Some persons, under pretence of zeal, informed the Pope, St. Pius V.,<sup>1</sup> that in the discourses at S. Girolamo, there were a great many frivolities, and that many examples were related without sufficient foundation, a fact which showed either great imprudence or great ignorance, and which might give scandal as well as do mischief to the hearers. The Pope had no sooner heard this, than, like a zealous pastor, he gave orders to two Dominican theologians, Father Master Paolini, and Father Master Alessandro Franceschi, afterwards Bishop of Forlì, to go separately, the one not knowing that the other was going, to hear the discourses, and observe minutely everything that was said and done at S. Girolamo, and if there was anything contrary to faith or sound morals, to report it to him.

While these fathers were fulfilling their commission, Alessandro de' Medici, afterwards Leo XI.,<sup>2</sup> and at that time ambassador of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, went to have an audience of the Pope. After they had discussed some matters of business, the Pope, knowing that Alessandro often went to hear the discourses at S. Girolamo, said he had understood that in the sermons delivered there due caution was not observed; that, for instance, the example of St. Apollonia throwing herself into the fire had been related, without its

<sup>1</sup> Michele Ghislieri, born 1504, entered the Order of St. Dominic, created Cardinal 1557, elected Pope 1565, died 1572.

<sup>2</sup> Born 1535, elected Pope 1605; his reign lasted twenty-six days.

being added that her conduct was directed by a particular inspiration of the Holy Ghost. Immediately after the audience, the ambassador went to the sermon at the Minerva, where he saw immediately in front of him Germanico Fedeli, one of Philip's penitents. Germanico requested him, on the part of the Saint, to go to S. Girolamo as soon as he could, for that Philip particularly wished to speak to him, and begged him to excuse his not rather going to visit him, as he ought, because he was lame and confined to his bed. In the afternoon Alessandro went to S. Girolamo, but before going up to Philip, he determined to hear the discourses, and amongst others he heard Francesco Maria Tarugi, who by the Saint's command handled the very matter which had been the subject of conversation between the Pope and his Excellency in the morning, and in particular related the story of St. Apollonia with proper caution, which greatly astonished the ambassador. After the discourses he went up to the Saint's room, and the very first words that Philip said to him were: "I pray you tell me, Signor Alessandro, what the Pope said about us this morning." Alessandro, seeing in so many ways that it was all known, freely related the whole, marvelling how Philip could have become acquainted with a thing which he had not spoken of to any one, and which the Saint could not have known except by divine revelation.

The religious commissioned by the Pope having, during some time, narrowly observed all that was said and done, made their report to his Holiness, and declared that they had heard nothing in the sermons at S. Girolamo that was not accompanied by the greatest piety and learning, and that they were astonished to

hear in the preaching such a union of fervour and security. The Pope was delighted with this good report, and rejoiced at having in his time men who took such pains to plant fervour and devotion in the hearts of the faithful. From that time he had so great an esteem for Philip and his subjects, that when Cardinal Alessandrino, his nephew, went as legate into Spain, France, and Portugal, he desired Francesco Maria Tarugi to go with him, making him acquainted with all the affairs which were to be treated about in those countries. The fathers also whom the Pope had deputed, conceived such an affection to the institute, that for many years they went almost every day to hear the sermons, and often preached themselves; as did Father Franceschino of Ferrara the Conventualist, a man of holy life and a famous preacher, and many other religious of different orders.

Another persecution arose against Philip and his disciples at S. Giovanni de' Fiorentini, which threatened the most disastrous consequences. An ecclesiastic had been received into the little community, who was soon found out to be a turbulent spirit. Unable to endure the suggestions and exhortations of the Saint, who desired to lead him into the way of perfection, he began to set himself against him and the other fathers, and at length Philip, finding him incorrigible, came to the determination, together with his children, to send him away from the community, which was done. Bent, however, on revenging himself for his expulsion from the house, he set to work to try and drive out Philip and his people, endeavouring by slanders and calumnies to bring him into bad odour with the Florentines, and leaving no stone unturned to succeed

in his wicked purpose. He managed to give such a skilful colouring to his false representations, and concealed his fraud so successfully, that the Florentines actually held several meetings for the purpose of taking from Philip the charge which, after such repeated entreaties, and through the interposition of the Pope's authority, they had laid upon him, and, at the same time, of dismissing from the house all whom the Saint had placed there. But God disposed otherwise; for one of the Florentines themselves urged such solid and efficacious reasons in favour of the Saint and his children, that no resolution was come to against them. Indeed this attack resulted in the more steady prosecution of the work which had been so well begun, and in such an establishment of the new institute as to insure its perpetuation.

## CHAPTER XVII

### FOUNDATION OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE ORATORY IN THE CHURCH OF SANTA MARIA IN VALLICELLA

PHILIP now, considering the serious danger which had menaced his people, of finding themselves without either house or church in which to carry on the exercises he had instituted, and seeing the fruit which they went on producing daily, began to listen to the earnest persuasions of some of his own dearest disciples and other persons of consideration, to make provision for the perpetuation of the institute.

The persecutions we have described had ceased, and he saw his plans becoming more and more firmly established. He had too humble an opinion of himself ever to have the boldness, as he himself said, to found a congregation; yet, influenced by the motives we have explained, he judged it well to secure a place which should be his own, and where he could carry out the work he had begun. While he was deliberating about this matter, two churches were proposed to him; Santa Maria in Monticelli, near the Strada della Regola, which was the easier to obtain, and Santa Maria in Vallicella<sup>1</sup> in the Contrada di Parione, at that time a parish church. Being in doubt which of the two to take, he thought it would be well in a matter

<sup>1</sup> See ARMELLINI, *op. cit.* p. 359; also FORCELLA, *Iscrizioni delle Chiese di Roma*, tom. iv. pp. 145-204, and tom. xiii. pp. 447-469, fol., Roma, 1874 and 1879; universally called *Chiesa Nuova*.

of such importance, on which the fruit of the institute depended, to have a conference with the Pope, at that time Gregory XIII., considering this the best way to ascertain the will of God. The Pope recommended him to take the church of Santa Maria in Vallicella, as being in a more frequented part of the town than the other, and therefore best suited for the exercises. Philip received this answer as the expression of the will of God, and without any further delay took means to obtain the church.

No sooner had he obtained it than he erected in it, by apostolic authority, as appears by the Bull of the same Pope, dated July 15th, 1575, a Congregation of secular Priests, which he named the Congregation of the Oratory, with power to make decrees and constitutions for its good government, on the condition that, after they had been drawn up and put in force, they were to have the approbation and confirmation of the Holy See. When Philip had got possession of the church, he sent two of his disciples to live there, namely, Germanico Fedeli, and Giovanni Antonio Lucci of Bagnarea, a very virtuous priest and one of the Saint's earliest spiritual children. They were to perform the functions of the church, to take charge of the surrounding parish, which its former Rector, Antonio Adjuti of Messina, had given up to them, reserving to himself the revenue, and to superintend the small building which Philip designed to erect there. But the fathers, seeing the church small and in bad repair, began to discuss how they could improve it. They would have wished to build it afresh from the foundations, but as they had no money, they could not venture on such a determination. While they







CHIESA NUOVA.

were hesitating about it, Philip, who had always an unlimited confidence in God, one morning, inspired by Him, gave an order to throw the old church down and to build a new one, which should be spacious enough for the exercises of the Congregation, and such as is seen at this day.

The old church then being dismantled, and the order for the new one given, Matteo di Castello, the architect, drew the line to mark out the length of the building. Philip was then at S. Girolamo; and as he was going out of the sacristy to say mass, he sent a messenger to Matteo to tell him not to draw the line till he came, for that he wished to be present himself. As soon as mass was over he went to the Vallicella, and when the architect had drawn the line as far as he thought the building ought to go, Philip told him to draw it farther. Matteo did so; Philip cried out, "Draw it farther still;" the architect obeyed a second time, but still the space seemed scanty to the Saint, and a third time he bade him draw it farther. At last they came to the spot which God had shown him in spirit, and he cried out, "Stop there, and dig." In digging they came to an old wall, ten palms wide, and longer than the whole church, of which no one knew before. Upon this they built all the wall on the gospel side, and found a quantity of solid materials, which sufficed for the greater part of the foundations and for a good portion of the walls, and on that side the fabric has never suffered as it has on the other. Thus the building of the new church was begun on the 17th of September, 1575, and Alessandro de' Medici, then Archbishop of Florence, laid the first stone with the usual solemnities.

As the building went on, opposition did not fail to arise, as is generally the case with every work of God. Some of those who dwelt near began to speak ill of the fathers, and some of the more evil-disposed tried to wound Father Giovanni Antonio Lucci, who superintended the work, with cross-bows and stones: but God always preserved him from injury; and it was observed, that all those who had most actively opposed the work died within two years. The building was finished in 1577; and on the 3rd of February, which was Septuagesima Sunday, the fathers began to celebrate the divine offices there. In order to give greater solemnity to the opening, the Pope granted a plenary indulgence to all who visited the new church on that day. An immense number of people flocked to it, and the Archbishop of Florence celebrated the first Mass solemnly. In the month of April in the same year, the Saint having given up all superintendence over the church and its community, in which however the rules he had introduced continued to be observed, the fathers left the Oratory of S. Giovanni de' Fiorentini, and began the discourses in the new church of the Vallicella, though the holy Father would not himself leave San Girolamo della Carità. The following year, the new church was declared, by a special privilege of the Pope, exempt from the jurisdiction of the Church of San Lorenzo in Damaso, and from that of the titular Cardinal.

The number of the fathers and brothers increased so rapidly that, although all who asked to enter the Community were not admitted, they soon amounted to one hundred and thirty, and there was not room enough to lodge them. There stood however close to their

buildings a little monastery of St. Elizabeth, in which were a few Poor Clares, whose superiors had ordered them to remove to another house, commonly called *delle Murate*, belonging to the same order; and this monastery the fathers thought of buying. When the plan was proposed to Philip, he would not on any account agree to such an expense, as it would load the house with debt, and he had such confidence in God that he felt sure a dwelling would be provided for them in some other way. As if for the very purpose of showing that Philip's judgment on the matter was according to God, and that he foresaw events before they took place, the Lord permitted that some of the fathers should try to obtain the monastery contrary to the Saint's wish. They actually carried their project into effect, but when it came to the execution of the deed, Mario Marzio, the Prelate charged with the government of the monastery, would not accept the bank bill which the fathers offered him, and insisted upon having ready money, which is by no means usual in such purchases. Upon this, Pompeo Pateri, a priest of the Congregation, set off to S. Girolamo to relate the whole affair to Philip; but as he was starting he met the Saint who was just going up the steps into our church, and before Pompeo could utter a word Philip said, "Did I not tell you that this monastery was not to be bought?" and then he added, "Give me that bill; for although we shall not buy the monastery, God will provide for us in another way:" and indeed five months afterwards Cardinal Cesi bought the monastery together with some other houses, and gave them to the Congregation.

In all this work Philip showed a remarkable trust

in Divine Providence. He began building with scarcely any funds, and yet no sooner was the work started than aid came from all quarters, so that in two years the fabric was completed; and though he was often in want of money, he never lost courage, but always said, "God will help me." Nor was his reliance vain; for in this building, as indeed on every other occasion when he had need, money came to him in such a way, that many, seeing him spend so much and never ask for any, believed that he obtained it miraculously. Some maintained that his undertaking at the Vallicella could not be carried out, and that he was making the building far too large; but he answered, "I can assure you that my confidence in God is such that I could find it in my heart to pull down this building, and build another larger and more sumptuous;" and talking one day on this subject with the Countess Adriana, wife of Count Prospero della Genga, he replied to some remarks which that lady made, "I have made a bargain with the Madonna not to die until the church is covered in," which indeed was verified by the event.

The first money with which the building was begun was a sum of two hundred crowns given by St. Charles Borromeo.<sup>1</sup> Then Gregory XIII. gave eight thousand; Cardinal Cesi bequeathed another eight thousand;<sup>2</sup> Angelo his brother, bishop of Todi, spent more than thirty thousand on the façade, besides building the chapel of the Presentation; Cardinal Frederick Borromeo also gave four thousand: and all the rest, which

<sup>1</sup> St. Charles Borromeo, Archbishop of Milan and nephew of Pius IV., born 1538, died 1584. See GIUSSANO, "Life of St. Charles Borromeo" (English Transl.), 2 vols., 8vo, London, 1884.

<sup>2</sup> Pierdonato, Cardinal Cesi, of an illustrious Roman family, born 1521, died 1586, buried in the Chiesa Nuova.

far surpassed the sum already named, was given by different persons of their own accord, without the aged Saint ever asking money of any one. Indeed he often said himself, that without anything to begin upon, by the grace of God and for His honour, a hundred thousand crowns had been spent in the building of the church. It happened one day that a brother of the Congregation, who looked after the works, told Philip there was no more money, and that the building had reached the cornices, and could not be carried up any further. The holy father told him not to be afraid, for that God would not fail to provide what was necessary. The brother suggested that there was a certain very rich gentleman who gave away almost all his fortune for the love of God, and that he would be sure to give them a very large alms, if he were only asked. Philip replied, "My son, I have never yet asked anything, and God has always provided for me; that gentleman knows our necessity very well, and if he wishes to give us an alms he will do it of his own accord." This answer, so full of confidence and detachment from earthly things, was not long without its reward. A few months afterwards an eminent advocate, who was very much attached to the Congregation, died and left more than four thousand crowns for the church; and six months later another died who left more than eight thousand. In this way did God seem to approve Philip's determination of never asking for anything.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### PHILIP LEAVES S. GIROLAMO, AND GOES TO LIVE WITH HIS DISCIPLES AT THE VALLICELJA

THOUGH Philip had now brought the foundation of the Congregation to a successful issue, and though he himself governed it, and as originator of the whole work nothing was done without him, still he had never yet been willing to leave his dwelling at S. Girolamo della Carità, although the fathers had often begged him to do so, and used every means to induce him. This reluctance appeared to his disciples a little hard; but the real cause of it was his dislike to be called the founder of the Congregation, a title very uncongenial to his lowly opinion of himself. Besides which, he said that he did not wish to fly from the cross, or from the place in which the Lord had given him so many opportunities of meriting; and lastly, that having lived there for three and thirty years, he could not bring himself to abandon the hope of keeping up to the end his long perseverance.

But the fathers saw how necessary for the Congregation was the presence of its head; and as they had failed hitherto in persuading him to comply with their wishes, they had recourse to Cardinal Cesi, beseeching him to request the Pope to give Philip an obedience to live with them at the Vallicella. The Pope considered the petition of the fathers to be reasonable,

and told the Cardinal to command Philip, in his name, by all means to go to live at the new church. The Saint, ever a lover of obedience above every other virtue, and especially of obedience to the Sovereign Pontiff, submitted instantly, and on St. Cecilia's day, 1583, left S. Girolamo and went to the Vallicella. The change of place, however, made no difference in his manner of living and his retired habits. At the Vallicella he chose one of the highest and most remote rooms of the house, that he might give himself the more easily to contemplation, as at S. Girolamo; and this manner of walking in the way of God, which he had undertaken when he was ordained priest, he persevered in to the very end of his life.

On the day of his removal, he commanded his disciples to carry in procession from S. Girolamo to the Vallicella all the few household goods he had, such as frying-pans, shovels, and other mean utensils, and while they passed by the Corte Savella, which was at that time a public gaol, the prisoners saw them and made game of them, and one of them cried out, "Father, fry us some good pancakes;" so that the Saint, according to his usual custom, managed to earn a little mortification both for himself and his followers. Such was the affection he bore to the church of S. Girolamo, that as long as he lived he kept the keys of his rooms, sometimes going there himself for an hour or so, and often sending one or another of his children to look at them. He ever lived, however, in holy peace at the Vallicella, and his residence there gave the greatest satisfaction, not only to his Congregation, but to all Rome.



## CHAPTER XIX

### OF THE INSTITUTE AND GOVERNMENT OF THE CONGREGATION

WHEN Philip went to live at the Vallicella, he was, as the acknowledged head and founder of the Congregation, elected by common consent its actual superior. He accepted this burden against his own will, but desiring to give an example in his own case of what was to be observed after his death, namely, that the superior was either to be elected or confirmed afresh every three years, he had this carried out in his own regard. In 1587, however, the fathers judged it expedient to except Philip from this rule, and on the 19th of June in that year, they declared him perpetual provost of the Congregation. At first he was determined not to accept the office, but he was at last overcome by the unanimous entreaties of his subjects and consented.

Thus confirmed as perpetual provost, he laid down as the basis of the Congregation, in accordance with its first erection, that those who entered it were to live as secular priests and clerics, and in all outward things to be conformed to that state. They were by no means to be bound by vow or oath; for he said that if any one was desirous of a more perfect state, and wished to take vows, there were plenty of religious orders in which they could fully satisfy their desire; but that

he wished his Congregation to be composed of persons who would serve God freely and without bond, devoting themselves to the salvation of their own souls and those of their neighbours, and to the observance of the Institute, which consisted chiefly in prayer, in the delivery of the word of God, in the frequentation of the Sacraments, and in mutual charity, which, he added, was to be the sole bond of his disciples. He protested that he had never had any idea of introducing a new order, but that he wished his children to try to imitate religious in their perfection, although they were not to imitate them in taking vows. Indeed, on one occasion, soon after the Congregation was established, when one of the members, who thought the fathers ought to renounce whatever they possessed, had actually drawn up a paper in support of his opinion, Philip, when he read it, scratched out the words "should not possess," and wrote above, "*habeant, possideant.*" In fact, he wished the community life of the Congregation to be such that in this as well as in other respects it might offer a tempting refuge to those who durst not presume to enter any of the regular orders because of the austerity of the rule, and yet wished for a retirement where they could serve God more freely and perfectly than in the world. He also drew up some constitutions, with the consent and counsel of the fathers, which were unanimously received. They were formed on the same idea as those which he had established at S. Giovanni de' Fiorentini, and before introducing them, he conferred with several persons of piety as well as of learning and prudence, and especially with Cardinal della Rovere, Archbishop of Turin, a man of much learning and singular

judgment. These constitutions, after being carefully considered and acted upon for more than thirty years successively, were finally approved and confirmed in an apostolic brief of February 24, 1612, by Pope Paul V.,<sup>1</sup> from whom our Congregation gratefully acknowledges that it has received very many favours.

The government and manner of life of the Congregation are treated of fully in the constitutions, and therefore we shall not say much about them. It is enough to remark that by St. Philip's means the Divine Majesty has introduced into Rome a method of preaching the Word of God every day familiarly and profitably. For Philip having from the very beginning of the discourses at S. Girolamo had experience of the great fruit of this exercise, established as part of the Institute, the practice which had been previously observed, that every day, Saturdays excepted, after some time spent in spiritual reading, four discourses should be preached in succession, of half-an-hour each; after which some hymns should be sung to recreate the minds of the hearers; and then that the exercise should conclude with a little prayer, and some Paters and Aves for the needs of Holy Church, and other particular intentions. He himself, for many years, was present at all the four sermons every day, as were also the greater number of his subjects; and when the Oratory was at S. Girolamo he was not only present, but during some time always bore a part in the discourses.

He commanded those who delivered the discourses not to treat of scholastic matters, except when it was unavoidable; for he said that the design of the Oratory

<sup>1</sup> Camillo Borghese, b. 1552, elected Pope 1605, d. 1621.

was not to cultivate scholastic knowledge, but to teach men how to acquire Christian virtues and to avoid sin; and that if they wished for learning, there were many schools and lectures to which they could resort. He also instructed the preachers not to indulge in fine and far-fetched conceits, but to speak in a useful and popular way. To some he assigned Lives of the Saints for their subject, to others Church History, to others again the Dialogues of St. Gregory, or other devout matters, by which they might move the hearers rather to compunction than to admiration. When he heard them touch upon subtle and curious questions, he made them come down from their seat, even if they were in the middle of their sermon. His general instructions to all were to use an easy and plain style, and to expatiate upon the beauty of virtue and the deformity of vice, and he laid particular stress on their relating some life or example of a Saint in their discourse, as he himself always did, so as to impress the doctrine more upon the minds of the audience.

In order that his children might not be drawn into giving up this manner of discoursing, he would not let them become absorbed in their studies or grow too much attached to them. Thus he would never allow Baronius to leave community duties, such as prayer, sermons, the confessional, and other ordinary functions, for the sake of study. He did not indeed forbid them to study, but he bade them give themselves to studies suitable to the institute, and not seek to have the name of being scholars, or to make a show of learning in the presence of others; the servant of God ought, he said, to try to acquire knowledge, but not to dis-

play it; nor again, to pursue it with excessive application, for in that there might even be sin; but he should do a little at a time, for this above other reasons, that the mysteries of Holy Scripture are learned rather by prayer than by study.

To the word of God Philip added the daily exercise of mental prayer, and for this end he ordered the Oratory to be opened every evening on week-days, in the winter at sunset, and in summer an hour before sunset, any one being at liberty to enter except women. The exercises began with half-an-hour's mental prayer, then they recited the litanies, and concluded with some *Paters* and *Aves* for such public or private necessities as were urgent at the time. On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, in place of the litanies, after a short and devout compendium of our Lord's Passion, they took the discipline, which lasted through the *Miserere*, the *De profundis*, and some short prayers; after which they sang the proper antiphon of our Lady,—the *Salve Regina*, or whatever it might be, according to the season.

As to the frequentation of the Sacraments, his wish was that the priests of the Congregation should ordinarily say mass every morning; and although he refused to give some of them leave to celebrate every day, by way of mortifying them, yet he expected them to be prepared at any moment that he should give them the order to do so. He preferred mass to be rather short than long, yet not too short for the decorous performance of such an action: so that he exhorted those who felt an excessive abundance of sweetness during mass, to say to themselves, "I do not wish for you here, but in my room;" meaning, that

while mass was to be said with devotion, it was not to be tedious to those who were hearing it, but that in the retirement of his own room a man may give a loose rein to his devotion.

He desired all the confessors to assist at the confessionals on the mornings of feasts, and on Wednesdays and Fridays; and one at least on the other days. He wished those who were not priests to confess at least three times a week, and to communicate according to the judgment of their confessor. He said that no one ought to communicate without such leave, because frequent communion at our own will increases our temptations, without our always getting strength to resist them.

With regard to domestic matters, and the community life and dress, he wished everything to be free from singularity. At table two thirds of the time were spent in spiritual reading; the other third he ordered to be employed in proposing two questions, one moral or scriptural, and the other a case of conscience. The fathers proposed them by turns, morning and evening, and every one answered in succession as it seemed best to him.

This is a sketch of the Congregation instituted by Philip, which has since been introduced into many cities of Italy, as well as of other countries, especially Spain, Portugal, and the Indies, and which still continues to spread, and always with great advantage to the places where it is established.<sup>1</sup> It was however

<sup>1</sup> It may be well, while speaking of the spread of the Oratory, to warn the reader that the celebrated Congregation of the Oratory of France must not be confounded with the Congregation of the Oratory of St. Philip Neri. The French Oratory was founded by Cardinal de Bérulle, from whom it received a distinct form and statutes, and also a distinct name;—that of the Congregation of the Oratory of Jesus.

the Saint's desire, that the Congregations founded in other places on the model of that of Rome, should be independent of it, and govern themselves, being subject to their ordinaries, and without any dependence one upon another. This was confirmed by Gregory XV. in a brief dated July 8, 1622.<sup>1</sup> Paul V. had previously granted another, on March 3, 1612, in which he forbade all the Congregations out of Rome, which professed to be of the Oratory, and to live under the protection of St. Philip Neri, to make or promulgate any other constitutions; and ordered them to receive and obey those already mentioned, in their manner of life and observances, as far as local circumstances should permit. Moreover, he forbade any one to erect another Congregation, or to open fresh houses of the institute in Rome.

Philip had such a firm confidence that God would preserve his Congregation, that if all the subjects in the house had determined to leave him he would not in the least have lost heart. He said that God had no need of men; and when any one left the Congregation he used to cry out, "God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham," and he declared that God Himself had made the Congregation, and would maintain it. On one occasion it was mentioned that some religious had tried to adopt the practice of daily discourses, and one of the fathers of the house remarked to Philip that this was not right, and ought to be opposed; but the Saint corrected him, and said,

<sup>1</sup> Alessandro Ludovisi, b. 1554, cr. Cardinal 1615, elected Pope 1621, d. 1623. Gregory XV. celebrated on 12th March 1622 the canonisation of St. Philip, St. Ignatius Loyola, St. Francis Xavier, St. Isidore Agricola, and St. Teresa of Jesus.

“*Quis det ut omnis prophetet ;*” and he used to declare that he desired nothing but the honour of God, and that he was ready to go on with the Oratory or to give it up, to hear confessions or not; and thus in things not only indifferent, but even good, he was always resigned to the will of God. Hence he was not very anxious about enlarging his Congregation, or increasing the number of its members. He had continual opportunities, if he had chosen to avail himself of them, of getting the best subjects in Rome; yet constantly, when he met with young men who to all outward appearance were excellently fitted for the institute, he either advised them to enter into different religious orders, or to persevere in piety in the condition of life in which they were, according as he judged most expedient for their souls.

For the rest, Philip always governed the Congregation with the greatest judgment and prudence, and in such a way as to maintain all in holy peace and concord. He used to say of its government, “No one would believe how hard it is to keep together free subjects; there is no easier way to do it than by being gentle and sparing in giving orders; he who wants to be well obeyed should give few commands.” Once when St. Charles Borromeo asked him how it was that he was so promptly obeyed, he answered, “Because I command little.” Hence he used not to say, do this, or do the other; but gave his orders rather in the shape of an exhortation than of a command; “I should like you to do this,” he would say, “but if it seems hard I will do it for you.” “I should like to impose this charge upon you, what do you say to it?” And by this means he obtained everything he wished.



But, notwithstanding this gentleness, he knew how to use authority when it was needed. Indeed his authority over many of his subjects was such, that with only a look he could guide them as he pleased. To fix his eye severely on a person was his ordinary method of rebuking him. He had such a horror of disobedience, that when any one had shown a notable repugnance to any duty, it mattered not what, he wished him immediately to leave the Congregation. Upon this subject the following words may still be seen in a paper written by his own hand: "In case a man is sensible that he cannot go on without making a trouble either about meals, or the work that is wanted of him in the church, or elsewhere, let him ask permission to leave the Congregation as quickly as possible; for otherwise after the first or second offence, his dismissal will be given him; for I am fully resolved, my fathers, not to keep any in the house who are not observers of the few orders which are given them."

On this account, in order to train them in the submission of their own judgment, when he gave an obedience to any one, and saw that he had a great repugnance to it, or excused himself, he pressed it on him more than ever. He often sent his subjects to do things at hours and times which were contrary to the dictates of human prudence; and all this was for the object of keeping his spiritual children in a humble opinion of themselves, and preventing them from occupying themselves, as he used to say, *in mirabilibus super se*.

It will be well to insert here a letter which Cardinal Baronius, when he was at Ferrara with Clement VIII.,

wrote to Father Pietro Consolini, who was at that time entrusted with the care of the novices. It will show what the Saint required of his subjects, and the lessons which Baronius himself had learned from him. "I ought to take shame to myself for not having written to you before, at least to thank you for the prayers you have offered up for me. I do so now, and give you most fervent thanks for them, and I pray you to persevere in them for the future, together with all my dear sons, your novices, for whom I desire all possible increase of piety. Make, my father, make those young plants resemble the grand tree of which they are slips, and force yourself to govern others as you were governed yourself. You may be sure that our blessed Father still lives, and sees and rules his sons, and keeps the scourge in his hand for the disobedient. As to myself, I beg you to count me and treat me as one of your novices, and to correct me as you think well, without showing me any respect. O that it might please God thus to renew my youth in my old age, and that the words of the prophet might thus be truly fulfilled in me, *Renovabitur ut aquilae juvenus tua!* This seems to me the proper spiritual sense of the sleep of Abisag with the aged David, namely, the union of spiritual fervour with old age. Truly did Abisag sleep with our holy father, as you well know; for so fervent was he in his old age, that he could be felt to be really on fire. It is neither the purple nor furred garments that warm the old, but only Abisag. O may my icy old age be worthy of such a companion! That you should pray for this for me is the end for which I have written to you now. May God console you, and make a saint of you! From Ferrara, the

14th of August, 1598. Your Reverence's brother to command, Cesare Cardinal Baronius."

Philip also held it to be a matter of great importance in the government of the Congregation, to spend the revenues very economically, calling them, as they really are, the property of the poor, and the patrimony of Christ. He was so sensitive upon this point that he could not endure any expenses in the Congregation, except such as were absolutely necessary, alleging the anecdote in Cassian, of the cook who was so sharply rebuked by his superiors for letting three lentils spoil; and also that of St. Antoninus, Archbishop of Florence, who went to study by the lamp in the church, that he might not diminish, as he said, the goods of the poor. If any one told him that this was running matters too fine, he used to say, "Remove this scruple of mine about their being the goods of the church, and then do what you will."

## CHAPTER XX

### OF THE GREAT OBEDIENCE AND REVERENCE WHICH HIS SUBJECTS PAID TO HIM

WHEN the Congregation was fairly established, one of the things Philip had most at heart was obedience. It was practised so perfectly, not only by the members of his Congregation, but even by his other penitents, that there was nothing, however difficult, which the majority of them would not readily have done at his command. Hence Cardinal Tarugi declares, that though his subjects were not bound to him by a vow of obedience, some of them almost equalled the old monks of Egypt in their submission; and on some other occasions when the Cardinal was speaking upon this subject, and exhorting some of our people to obedience, he said, that so far as he knew, no religious superior, not even of ancient times, was ever more perfectly obeyed than Philip was by some of his spiritual children. Neither was this assertion unfounded; for many declared with regard to themselves, that they had such faith in Philip, that if he had said to them, "Throw yourself out of the window," they would have done so without fail; and others declared, that if he had ordered them to throw themselves into the fire, they would have done so without reasoning upon it, because they considered his words as inspired by God. And this will not

appear exaggerated if the instances which we shall now proceed to relate are well considered.

Philip was one day talking familiarly with some of his spiritual children on the virtue of obedience, and exhorting them to it, especially in arduous and difficult matters. It so happened that there was a fish-pond in the place, and in the course of the conversation he said, "Which of you would be so prompt in this virtue that he would throw himself into that fish-pond, if I ordered him?" He had scarcely uttered the words, when one of the company, with great simplicity, and without stopping to reflect that this was not the Saint's intention, leapt into the pond, and ran some risk of being drowned, though fortunately some of the bystanders pulled him out uninjured.

Another time, in order to try them, and to make them advance in spirituality, he ordered three of his disciples to strip themselves and walk through the Banchi. They immediately set off to perform the obedience, and had even begun to strip themselves, when the Saint, satisfied with their promptitude, bade them put on their clothes again, saying, "That will do; there is nothing more needed."

Another time as he was passing the Coliseum with some of his disciples on his way to visit the sick in the hospital of S. John Lateran, he found a poor man lying in the dirt, very ill, covered with wounds, and apparently dying. This spectacle moved his compassion, and he made a sign to one of them, named Francesco, to take him on his shoulders and carry him to the hospital. The Saint had scarcely made the sign before Francesco had taken him up; and he carried him to the hospital, which is some distance

from the Coliseum, to the wonder and edification of all those who saw him.

Baronius suffered from such a great weakness of stomach, that the least morsel of food gave him excruciating pain; and this was coupled with such a febleness in his head, that the Saint had forbidden him to make mental prayer, or in any other way to fatigue his mind. One day, while he was in this condition, he went to the Saint in the afternoon as usual. In the room there was a large roll and a lemon. Philip said to him, "Cesare, take that roll and that lemon, and eat the whole of them in my presence." Although Baronius fully believed that such food would naturally cause serious injury to his health, and perhaps even endanger his life, nevertheless putting his trust in the virtue of obedience, he made the sign of the cross and ate the whole. Not only, however, did it do him no injury, but he was immediately freed from the weakness both of his head and stomach. He also declares, that having gone nine years successively to the hospital of Santo Spirito to serve the sick in obedience to the Saint, it sometimes happened that he went there with a fever on him, and when he had finished his work, returned home perfectly well. And indeed the examples of this sort which we might relate are almost numberless.

It was likewise observed by many, that what his penitents did out of obedience to him always turned out well. Fabrizio de' Massimi, one of the Saint's first penitents and greatly beloved by him, had two sons who had been ill for a long while, and at last became so reduced, that one of them could take

nothing but broth, and the other only ate reluctantly. Fabrizio wished to take them to a castle of his, called Arsoli, about twenty-eight miles from Rome, hoping that by leaving Rome he might save their lives. He consulted the physicians, who told him that as it was July, and in the dog-days, he was on no account to move them; in fact, they declared that if he took the children from Rome they would inevitably die. Fabrizio went to take the advice of the holy father, who said openly and before one of the physicians, that he was by all means to take them, and to have the litters ready for the following day, and not to have any fear about the matter. Fabrizio obeyed, and receiving the Saint's blessing, set off the next day with his children, who did not suffer the least, either on the road or at Arsoli; indeed, one of them, when only four miles from Rome, descended from the litter, mounted on horseback, and accomplished the rest of the journey as if he had been well.

Vincenzo Crescenzi, brother of Cardinal Crescenzi, being one day in the Saint's room with some other young men, asked leave to go out for a walk with them as far as S. Francesco di Ripa, and all of them, after having obtained his blessing, left the room. It happened that as they were returning home in a carriage, Vincenzo unfortunately fell from the door upon a paved road, and one of the wheels passed over his legs. His companions immediately cried out to heaven, thinking that his legs were both broken, and that he would be crippled. Nevertheless he got up of himself without the slightest injury, and walked home on foot, saying, "Obedience to our father saved me." When he returned to the Saint, Philip told

him it was a miracle, and that he must be mindful of it, and thank God for it; and this he repeated at different times. The young man afterwards became a Barefooted Carmelite friar, and died some years after provincial of his order, having by his devout life given great edification to all who knew him.

Another young Roman noble relates of himself, that after his marriage, whenever for any just cause he was obliged to go out to any party, if he went with Philip's leave he was not molested by bad thoughts; but when he went without his leave, he was always assailed by them.

The Abate Marco Antonio Maffa, of whom we shall speak elsewhere, was most averse to preaching, and, as he himself declares, he had such a repugnance to it, that he would rather have been exposed to any danger than preach; yet when Philip commanded him to deliver a discourse, he mortified himself and obeyed, and became one of the best preachers in the Oratory.

When the fathers wished on one occasion to send F. Pompeo Pateri to Milan upon some important business, he excused himself on the ground of unfitness. The Saint however ordered him to perform the obedience laid upon him, and as he left Rome, he said to him, "Go, and trust in God: but beware of examining the command of your superiors, for everything will turn out happily and as you would wish." And so in fact it did, and that very shortly, notwithstanding the vehement opposition of persons of influence, and the threats they uttered against him. In all his necessities and perils he never had recourse to any one, save only to the prayers of the Saint, recom-



mending himself to him by letter, and being always mindful of his words.

On the other hand, it was observed that those who disobeyed Philip generally got themselves into trouble. Francesco Maria Tarugi was mostly very obedient to the Saint; but he had a strong desire to rise during the night to pray, and he asked leave to do so. Philip, knowing the delicacy of his constitution, refused it. This did not satisfy Tarugi, who begged harder than ever, and at last put his thought into execution. But the very first night that he did so he injured his head so much that for twelve months he could make no mental prayer at all.

Another of the Saint's penitents took the discipline every day without his leave, until at last, a scruple arising in his mind, he asked permission to do so. Philip, knowing that it was not good for him, said that he was so far from being pleased with his taking it every day, that he wished him never to take it at all. The penitent was not contented with this, and importuned Philip so much that at last he said, "Well, I *command* you to take the discipline once a week," at the same time fixing the day. Strange to say, no long time elapsed before the penitent came and threw himself at his feet, and confessed that when the appointed day came, on which he was under obedience to take the discipline, he felt such a repugnance that he actually could not inflict it upon himself; although before he had received the obedience, he had the greatest pleasure in that penance, and inflicted it upon himself every day.

The Saint had forbidden one of his penitents to go to Tivoli, and another to Naples; both of them however went in spite of him; and the first fell from his horse and broke his thigh, and the other had a dangerous voyage by sea. A young man of Pisa, whose name is not mentioned, persisted in keeping company with another in disobedience to the Saint who, when he heard of it, said, "This man will come, to a bad end." Not long after he murdered his companion in the Campo di Fiore, and fled away, and was never heard of again.

Not only in spiritual, but even in temporal matters, was it observed that obedience to Philip was blessed, and disobedience punished.

Fabrizio de' Massimi, who has already been mentioned, had put out a great sum of money on the life of his daughter Elena;<sup>1</sup> and when he was leaving Rome in the spring, as he usually did for his castle of Arsoli, he went to take leave of Philip, who said to him, "Before you go, take up that money which depends on your daughter's life." Fabrizio did not obey, for his daughter was young, strong, and healthy, so that it did not appear necessary. In September she fell ill, and died before there was time to get the money secure; and thus by his disobedience to Philip, he lost the whole of it. A similar thing happened to Curzio Lodio of Aquila; the Saint told him not to lend a certain sum of money; he persisted in doing so, and never could get it back again. On the other hand, several of his penitents, by following his counsel, escaped the loss of hundreds of crowns. A poor cow-

<sup>1</sup> See *Istoria di ELENA DE' MASSIMI*, scritta in 1593 dal P. ANTONIO GALLONIO, 8vo, Roma, 1857.

herd, named Domenico, had placed in a bank three hundred crowns, which was his whole fortune; one day, Philip said to him, "Go and take that money out directly." He obeyed, and shortly after the bank broke. The same thing happened, in the case of much larger sums of money, to Ludovico Parisi and Francesco Fortini. Marc' Antonio Ubaldini in like manner by obeying the Saint escaped a great loss, which many others incurred. A noble family who were going to enter into an arrangement, involving many thousand crowns, with a relative to whose property they were to succeed, consulted Philip, who said, "Do not do it," and a few days afterwards the relation, who was then quite well, and in the flower of his age, died suddenly, and they were at once masters and heirs of all.

Philip taught the virtue of obedience by example as well as by words. As he was a secular priest and nearly always superior of the Congregation, he had not the full opportunity of showing to what an extent he really possessed it; but he was most exact in practising it as far as he could. We have already seen what regard he paid to the slightest hint of his superiors in the institution of the Congregation; and in the daily occurrences of community life, as well in the public service as in private, he was always most punctual in everything. When called to the door on business, or to the sacristy to say mass, or to the church to hear confessions, he left everything else and went down immediately, never requiring to be summoned a second time, and going down for all sorts of people and at all hours. He said it was better for a man to obey the sacristan or porter who called him,

than to remain in his room praying; and if any one said that at least time ought to be given to priests to prepare for saying mass, he answered, that certainly preparation was necessary, but that the true preparation of a good priest was to live so that he could, as far as his conscience was concerned, say mass or communicate at any hour.

He was so obedient to his physicians that although he had such a repugnance to taking medicine that it almost made him sick, he always submitted and took whatever was ordered. If they said he was to leave off saying mass, or hearing confessions, or making mental prayer, he did so immediately without any reply. Angelo da Bagnarea once commanded him to desist from saying office for forty days; he obeyed without a word, although it was the keenest mortification to him. When he was ill at S. Girolamo from an infirmity which was altogether supernatural, the physicians ordered the draught from a window to be stopped, as if that would be of service to him. He consented, and behaved as if he quite agreed with them, and as if the indisposition arose from the causes they supposed. When the physicians were gone, Giovanni Antonio Lucci said to him, "I suspect this infirmity does not come from the cause they assign, and yet you agreed with all they said." The Saint answered, "Why, what would you have me do? one must yield to others sometimes."

He also gave many instructions on this matter. He said that those who really desired to advance in the ways of God must give themselves up altogether into the hands of their superiors; and that those who

did not live under obedience ought to make a voluntary submission of themselves to a learned and discreet confessor, whom they should obey in the place of God, discovering to him all their affairs with the utmost freedom and simplicity, and determining nothing without his counsel: and he added that those who acted in this way were secured against having to give an account of their actions to God. He admonished persons to think well and to pray much before choosing a confessor; but when they had once chosen him, not to leave him except for most urgent reasons, and to put the greatest possible trust in him, and confer with him about the minutest points; for that God will never allow him to err in things which substantially regard the salvation of their souls. He used to say that it was a common artifice of the devil, when he could not make a man fall into great sins, to put forth all his skill to create distrust between him and his confessor, for by this means he contrives little by little to do great mischief. He added that obedience was a compendious way of arriving at perfection; and he very much preferred a man who lived an ordinary life under obedience, to one who practised great penances out of his own head; and lastly, he said that obedience is the true holocaust which we sacrifice to God on the altar of our heart. He desired, moreover, that a man should force himself to obedience even in trivial things which appear of no moment, because it is the best practice for obedience in great things.

I must not omit to relate an amusing incident bearing on this subject which happened to Francesco della Molara, a Roman noble and one of Philip's

penitents. The Saint sent him one day to S. Girolamo della Carità, giving him the keys of his rooms. When the youth got there, he tried to open the door, but though he made several attempts, he could not manage to get it open. At last, tired of trying, he turned to go back to the Vallicella. But as he went downstairs he felt ashamed to go to the Saint without having opened the door; so he went back to try once more; and now he was not only unable to open the door, but he could not even turn the key. He wondered much at this, because he had so many times opened the door with the same key. He was obliged however to return to the Vallicella, very much ashamed of himself, and to tell the Saint what had happened to him. Philip replied, "Go away, you silly fellow, go back and open it." Francesco obeyed, and when he arrived there, put the key in, and opened the door with the greatest ease. Full of surprise he returned to Philip, who said, "Now learn from this the importance of obeying without reasoning."

He exhorted the members of his Congregation to leave everything else, even prayer, for community duties. He taught them also never to ask for anything particular in the sacristy, whether a particular hour, or particular vestments, or anything else particular, but to be entirely subject to the sacristan, and to say mass whenever they were called and wherever they were sent. He said that true obedience is something more than merely doing what we are told; it consists in doing it without reasoning. When, on the contrary, any one reasoned about an obedience, or made any sort of answer, whatever other estimable

qualities he had, Philip made no account of him ; and although he was ordinarily full of sweetness, yet towards those who failed in community duties,—who, for instance, were not at meals with the rest,—he showed himself extremely stern, and rebuked them very sharply, as disturbers of the public peace, and said that it ought to be considered as certain, that what is commanded us by those who hold the place of God towards us is in reality the best and most perfect thing we can find to do, whatever appearances there may be to the contrary.

Whenever any of the numerous spiritual children whom he sent into various religious orders came to visit him, he used to give them this advice, that if they were doing good in any place, and actually converting souls, and obedience ordered them to quit that place for another, they were to leave everything willingly and without a word, even though the fruit were certain in the one place, and they were sure to do no good in the other, because the command was a sign that God did not wish to have that good by their means. For it is not enough, as he used often to say, to see if God wishes to have the good at which we aim, but we must consider also if He wishes to have it through our instrumentality, in that way, and at that time ; and it is true obedience which enables us to discern all this. He used to teach also that to be perfect, it is not enough to obey and honour superiors, but we must honour our equals and inferiors also. He repeatedly told confessors that they did very ill, when they had any opportunity of exercising their penitents in this virtue of obedience, and through negligence or human respect omitted to do

so ; and he urged them rather to mortify the will and understanding of their spiritual children by obedience than to impose upon them a multitude of corporal penances ; for he said that to mortify one passion, however small, was of more use than many abstinences, fasts and disciplines.





**BOOK II**  
**OF THE VIRTUES OF ST. PHILIP**



## CHAPTER I

### PHILIP'S LOVE AND DEVOTION TOWARDS GOD

HITHERTO we have related Philip's actions, and the holy life which he led, first as a layman and afterwards as a priest; we have now to give the reader a more vivid and faithful picture of his virtues in particular. It will be well to begin, therefore, with that virtue which is the root and foundation of all others, that is charity and the love of God, which so burned within him that the interior flame seemed to break forth even in his body; so that sometimes in saying office, or after mass, or in any other spiritual action, sparks as it were of fire were seen to dart from his eyes and from his face. This inward fire was such that it sometimes made him swoon, forcing him to throw himself on his bed, where he is said to have lain occasionally a whole day without any other sickness than that of divine love. On one occasion it so burned his throat that he was ill for several days. Sometimes, even when in company with others, he was surprised by this fire, and would unwarily break out into the words of the apostle, "*I desire,*" but immediately recollecting himself, he would, to conceal his devotion, suppress the rest of the sentence, "*to be dissolved and to be with Christ.*" Hence Father Ignazio Festini, the Dominican, who before he became a religious used to go to him every morning, declares that he used to find him in a sort of ecstasy, and that

in Philip seemed to be realized what St. Paul said of himself: "*I am filled with consolation; I more than abound with joy.*" Others said that Philip might truly cry out with S. Ephrem: "*Lord, withhold the waters of Thy grace and depart from me, for I am not able to endure the magnitude of Thy sweetness.*" Indeed this actually did happen to him several times in his first fervours, as we have already mentioned. Sometimes when he entered a church, he felt himself so moved by this fervour, that he could scarcely kneel down before he was obliged to get up again, for fear of going into an ecstasy; and at other times, when he was praying in public, he was so carried away, and remained with his eyes fixed on heaven so intently, that those who saw him could well imagine they beheld the glorious St. Martin in the act of prayer.

Though Philip tasted such sweetnesses, and continually had a sublime sense of heavenly things in prayer, yet he wished to serve God, not for interest, as he called it, but for pure love; and therefore he would have desired to love the Divine Majesty without any sensible sweetness, simply because It was the deserving object of his love.

To pass on to the particular effects of this love, Philip's devotion to the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar was more tender than can be expressed. When he was a layman he generally communicated every morning, and when he was subdeacon and deacon he had the most sensible pleasure in touching the chalices, and it seemed as if he could never satiate himself with handling them. After he was ordained priest, he said mass every morning when he was well, and communicated when he was too unwell to celebrate; and this

he generally did in the night, as soon as the bells had rung for matins. In the latter years of his life, for his own convenience and that of others, he obtained leave from the Pope to reserve the Blessed Sacrament in a small chamber fitted up as an Oratory close to his room. His devotion and humility at communion were so great, that he sometimes covered his face to avoid observation, and remained thus for a long time, meditating and making his thanksgiving. If ever the fathers for any reason were late in coming to give him communion, the distress he felt was so great that he could not sleep till he had received it. In the year 1577, when he was so seriously ill that the physicians had given up all hope of his recovery, he heard the bell ring for matins one night, and as usual asked for communion. Francesco Maria Tarugi, who was waiting upon him and saw that he had had no sleep that night, was afraid that his devotion and the tears he used to shed on such occasions would destroy all chance of sleep and endanger his life; he therefore gave orders that he should not be communicated. But the long delay made Philip suspect the reason, and he sent for Tarugi and said to him: "Francesco Maria, I tell you I cannot sleep for the desire I have of the Blessed Sacrament; make them bring me communion; I shall go to sleep as soon as I have received It." And in truth, no sooner had he communicated than he began to amend, and in a short time was perfectly well.

Indeed what ordinarily prevented him from sleeping was either his continual application to prayer, or the vehement desire he had of being united with his Lord in the most holy communion. One night, Father

Antonio Gallonio, when he was communicating him, held the Blessed Sacrament in his hand for some time, and was slow in giving it to him; but the aged Saint unable to endure the delay, and overcome by his desire, turned to him and said: "Antonio, why do you hold my Lord in your hand, and not give Him to me?" Gallonio, perceiving the wonderful affection of the servant of God, could not contain his tears while he was giving him communion.

This devotion to the Blessed Sacrament induced him to counsel all his penitents who were priests to adopt the holy and praiseworthy custom of saying mass every day, when not legitimately hindered. This was by no means common in those days; but he thought it a grave error to abstain from saying mass daily, under the pretext of rest or recreation, and not for any other sufficient reason: "For," said he, "the soul that seeks recreation out of the Creator, and consolation out of Christ, will never find them;" and he used to add: "He who seeks consolation out of the proper place, seeks his own damnation, and he who would be wise without the true wisdom, or saved without the Saviour, is not well, but sick; is not wise, but a fool." It is true that he forbade several to say mass every day, as I have mentioned already; but he did it in order to mortify them and to enable them to merit more; and some others he would not allow to celebrate immediately after their ordination, but held them back for awhile, in order to kindle in them a greater desire and hunger for this most holy food.

He was anxious also that laymen, as well as priests, should frequent this Sacrament; hence some of his penitents communicated every week, many on every

feast, some three times a week, and some, though they were but few, every day. Many by this means became men of holy lives and of great perfection. He wished however that confession should be even more frequent than communion; so that very many confessed every morning, although they did not communicate so often.

His devotion in saying mass was so great, that whilst others have to recollect themselves in order to celebrate devoutly, he was obliged to distract himself in order to get through his mass and not go into an ecstasy. Hence, before approaching the altar, he used generally to get Father Pietro Consolini to read to him some light or amusing book. Yet even then he could not altogether restrain himself, and was often obliged to pause till his strength, which divine love had taken from him, returned again. At other times he made such violent efforts to repress his fervour, that his whole body fluttered, and made the predella of the altar tremble; and when he was saying mass in his private chapel, he sometimes made the whole room shake; at other times again, he was so abstracted and absorbed in God, that the server was obliged to pull him by the chasuble, and remind him of the epistle, or the gospel. On this account when he said mass in public he allowed no one to serve him but those of his own subjects who were most familiar with him and accustomed to him, so that as soon as they perceived anything of this kind coming on they might at once recall him. These movements of his were very quick, and not accompanied by anything ungainly; so that the bystanders easily perceived that it might be said, *Agebatur potius quam ageret*, and when



they saw him thus abstracted, far from taking scandal or being disedified by it, only felt excited to devotion and reverence.

In the course of mass, when he came to the offertory, the joy and exultation which he felt were so great that his hand repeatedly leaped in such a way that he could not pour the wine into the chalice without leaning his arm upon the altar, even when he was in the flower of his age, and though he never had anything like palsy about him. Yet however much he fluttered, though he was accustomed to put a good deal of wine into the chalice, and the chalice was a very small one, he never spilled a single drop. Marcello Benci, who served his mass, says that he repeatedly saw the chalice, which Philip had filled with wine, full of pure blood after the consecration. In the memento he made extraordinary movements, even leaped, and was agitated all over; when he perceived it he would stamp with his foot, rub his forehead, or say to the server, "Turn those dogs out, send those beggars away," to endeavour to get rid of the trembling; sometimes, especially after the consecration, in the exaltation of his spirit, he would rise upon the tips of his toes, and seem as if he were dancing; at others he was lifted a span or more from the ground. At the elevation of the Sacred Host, it often happened that his arms remained lifted up in the air without his being able to draw them back again for awhile; and in order to avoid this, he was accustomed, as soon as he had raised the Host a little above his head, to lower it again immediately; for if he paused ever so short a time he could not easily do so. The same happened to him at the *Domine non sum dignus*,

so that he used to communicate as quickly as possible.

In receiving the Lord's Body he had an extraordinary sensible sweetness, making all the gestures which people do who taste something very sweet; for this reason he used to select the largest hosts he could find, that the most holy species might remain in him a longer time, and that he might taste the longer that delicious food, in taking which he sometimes broke out, as they who served his mass attest, into the most unspeakable affections. In taking the Precious Blood, he licked and sucked the chalice with such tenderness, that it seemed as if he could not separate himself from it. He wore off the silver as well as the gilding on the lip of the chalice, and even left the marks of his teeth impressed upon it. It was for this reason that he always wished the server not to look him in the face, but to remain at a little distance, telling him not to bring the ablution till he made a sign for it; and if he said mass at any altar except the high altar, which he did very rarely, he would not allow those near to put themselves in any position where they could see his face, in order that he might be able to take the Precious Blood after his own fashion, without their being able to observe the gestures of that singular devotion which God communicated to him. For the same cause he often said the last mass, because there were few people present to observe his tears. His mass, however, when he said it in public, was rather short than long, in order that he might not tire the devotion of the people, and in order to check the overpowering sweetness which he felt; yet he himself said it with

so much devotion, that it continually caused tears in those who were present. After mass, he used to cover his face in order not to be observed during his thanksgiving, and he would have liked to have passed hours alone in prayer. After his thanksgiving, he returned to his room so abstracted, that he often passed people without perceiving them, and his face was as pale as death, so that he hardly looked like a living person.

In the latter years of his life, by the advice of learned and spiritual men, he obtained leave from Gregory XIV.<sup>1</sup> to celebrate in a little chapel close to his room, in order that he might be able to treat with his Lord with greater freedom of spirit. There when he came to the Agnus Dei, those who were assisting at his mass went out, and the server lighted a little lamp, and then put out the altar candles, fastened the shutters which were twice folded, and locked both the doors, so that neither the Saint's voice, nor any affection to which he might give vent during the time, could by any means be overheard. This being done, the server hung outside the chapel a little tablet on which was written, "Silence! the Father is saying mass." In about two hours or sometimes more he returned and knocked at the door; if the Saint answered he entered, lighted the altar candles again, opened the shutters, and the Saint went on with the mass, sorrowing that the time had passed so quickly. If he gave no answer to the knock, the server waited awhile and then returned, and did so till the Saint gave the signal for him to go in. What passed between him and God during that time none can say;

<sup>1</sup> Niccolo Sfondrati, b. 1535, cr. Cardinal 1580, elected Pope 1590, took the name of Gregory XIV., d. 1591.



"SILENCE ; THE FATHER IS SAYING MASS."



but those who served him, when they at last entered the chapel, found him in such a state that he seemed on the very point of expiring.

In administering this Sacrament to others, he felt such fervour that his whole body bounded, to the great marvel of those who saw him. A Jewish convert, the wife of one of the neophytes mentioned before, went to S. Girolamo to receive communion from the holy father. When he took the pyx into his hand, she saw him tremble so violently that the particles of the Blessed Sacrament were lifted up above it, and his face gleamed as if it were on fire, whilst after the communion he was deadly pale, as if some grave accident had befallen him. All this proceeded from the extraordinary devotion with which he communicated this woman, who had just become a convert to the faith with her husband.

Almost the same thing happened to Nero del Nero, a Florentine gentleman and lord of Porcigliano, when receiving holy communion from him in company with Barsum, the Archdeacon of Alexandria in Egypt, who had been sent by the patriarch as ambassador to the Pope. The Saint began to tremble so much through the abundance of his devotion, that his right hand made a fluttering movement, and raised itself about a span from the pyx. Nero, fearing lest some particles should fall, (though no such accident ever did occur to the Saint), reverently took hold of his arm, and held it steady until he had given communion. When he went afterwards to take his leave of him, as he always did, the holy old man drew him close to his breast and embracing him, said, "You have excited me a little too much this morning:" alluding to

Nero's bringing with him the archdeacon, for whom he had made particular prayer in his mass, in doing which he had become more fervent than usual, both because the archdeacon was a stranger, and because Philip knew that he had come to the Pope on very important business. Another time when he was giving communion to the Marchesa Rangona, the particle with which he communicated her was seen in the air separated from his fingers, to the great admiration of the beholders: and one morning in his little chapel he himself was seen raised a span from the ground while he was communicating; so great was the devotion with which he performed this action.

Philip had also an excessive devotion to the most holy Passion of our Saviour, and meditated almost continually upon it. He always kept about him a figure of our crucified Lord in bronze separate from the cross, that he might the more easily vent the affections of his heart upon it. From this devotion sprang his desire, of which we have already spoken, to go to the Indies and shed his blood for the love of Christ. As he was not able to carry this into effect, he managed at least to satisfy his desire in part after another fashion; for when blood issued from his nose or from his mouth, he prayed the Lord that so much might flow as would correspond in some manner to the Blood shed for love of him. In this request our Lord gratified him, for one day there issued from him such a quantity, that he lost his sight for a time; and at other times he was left as if dead, without any discernible pulse. Thus we read of St. Lutgarde, that when she longed for martyrdom, and God did not see fit to grant her request, He contented her by

allowing a large quantity of blood to flow from her mouth: and then Christ appeared to her, and told her that for the great desire which He had seen in her to shed her blood for His sake, He had accorded her that grace. So it happened to Philip, whom the Lord allowed many times over to shed his blood very copiously; in fact his last infirmities were nothing else but discharges of blood. Hence arose the custom of painting him as a priest in red vestments, although red is properly the exclusive colour of martyrs, to denote the vehement desire he had to shed his blood for the love of Christ.

This ardent thirst to offer himself as a holocaust to his crucified Lord, stimulated him to inflame the hearts of others with the same love; so that sometimes he would say, "May Saint Antony's fire burn you;" meaning, may you burn with the same fire of divine love as Saint Antony. To others he said, "May you be murdered,"—meaning, for the faith, by means of holy martyrdom; and once when he was in the ante-chamber of Gregory XIV., he said the same of the Pope.

Lastly, he had so tender a devotion to the most holy Name of Jesus, that in pronouncing it, as he repeatedly did, he felt an unspeakable sweetness. He had also an extraordinary relish in reciting the Credo, and said the Pater Noster with such attention, that when he once began it, it seemed as if he could never reach the end.



## CHAPTER II

### OF PHILIP'S DEVOTION TO OUR BLESSED LADY, AND TO HOLY RELICS

OUR blessed Lady is, as St. Bernard teaches us, the neck by which all spiritual gifts descend from Christ the head, into the mystical body of the Holy Church. Philip therefore was so devoted to her that he had her name continually in his mouth, calling her his love and his consolation, and exalting her as the dispensatrix of all the graces which the goodness of God bestows upon the sons of Adam. His affection towards her was so tender, that he used to speak of her as little children speak of their mother, calling her "Mamma mia." He frequently visited her images in the churches of Santa Maria del Popolo, S. Agnese in the Piazza Navona, S. Maria in Trastevere, and elsewhere, remaining before them a long while, giving free vent to his devotion towards her. He often spent whole nights in prayer, indulging in the sweetest colloquies with her. He was once seriously ill at S. Girolamo della Carità, and the physicians had ordered that he should not be left alone at night, but that some one should always remain in the room with him. One night Father Giovanni Antonio Lucci sat up with him, and as it was summer, and the room extremely small, the heat was so intense that he did not think he could persevere at his post through the night, and

therefore went to his duty with no great willingness. Nevertheless he spent the time with so much sweetness and satisfaction, that when the Ave Maria rang in the morning, he thought it was the evening Ave, the night had passed so quickly; for in fact, the Saint, not supposing that there was any one to hear him, did nothing but converse with our Blessed Lady in such affectionate terms that it actually seemed as if she were present, and discoursing with him face to face.

He had two ejaculations which he was continually making in her honour. The first was, "Virgin Mary, Mother of God, pray to Jesus for me," sometimes lengthened thus, "Pray to Jesus thy Son for me a sinner:" the second was simply, "Virgin and Mother;" for he said that in these words all the possible praises of the Madonna were briefly comprised; because, first of all, she was called by her name *Mary*, and those two great titles were given her of *Virgin* and *Mother*, and then that other unspeakable one of *Mother of God*; and lastly, the most holy fruit of her womb was named, —*Jesus*, the bare mention of Whose Name has power to soften and melt the heart. Of these two prayers he taught his penitents to make a chaplet, repeating one or other of them sixty-three times, with the Pater Noster, to the great profit of their souls. He himself almost always carried beads in his hand, in order to practise this devotion, which was so acceptable to the Divine Goodness, that many of those who tried it confessed that it was a singular aid to them in their temptations. A lay brother of our Congregation was very much molested by thoughts against our Blessed Lady; he mentioned his temptation to the Saint, who

proposed this devotion to him as a remedy, and soon after he adopted it, he was entirely freed from the annoyance.

Philip declared that he had received numberless favours from our Blessed Lady, and in particular that in praying before an image of her he was delivered from many horrible things with which the devil attempted to frighten him. He had a grateful remembrance of the benefits which he had received from her; and when the altars were being erected in the new church, he ordered that a mystery of our Saviour should be painted on each of them, and that the Madonna should appear in the mystery. Hence, after the beatification of the Saint, when the fathers had to expose his picture in his chapel, they decided that our Blessed Lady should be introduced into it, because they remembered how, like another St. Bernardine of Siena, he was, so to speak, enamoured of her.

During the building of the church, Giovanni Antonio Lucci, who superintended the work, had left a piece of roof above a part of the old church, where there was an ancient and very devotional picture of our Blessed Lady, the same which is now at the high altar. He had done this in order that mass might be said under it, and the Blessed Sacrament reserved. One morning the holy father sent for him in great haste, and ordered him to have the roof taken off immediately, because that very night he had seen that it would have fallen if the glorious Virgin had not held it up with her own hands. Giovanni Antonio immediately went with some workmen to execute the obedience, and found that the principal beam had started from the wall, and

was apparently self-supported in the air, so that all who saw it cried out, "A miracle! a miracle!"

Our Blessed Lady corresponded to the devotion of Philip, by giving him a church dedicated under her most holy name, that the son who was so devoted to her might not be removed from his mother; and before he died she favoured him with that wonderful apparition, of which we shall speak fully in its place, which left him so full of sweetness and of devotion towards her, that during the short time that he survived, he could never satiate himself with crying out over and over again: "O my children, be devout to the Madonna, be devotees of Mary!"

He had so great a reverence and affection for all the Saints, both in general and in particular, that in his last years he had their lives read to him every day for several hours, and both heard and spoke of them with such relish, that he could hardly tear himself from this occupation. His particular patrons were St. Mary Magdalen, on whose vigil he was born, and the apostles St. Philip and St. James, on whose feast he used to give his children some particular recreation. On the more solemn feasts he was singularly favoured by God with sentiments of extraordinary devotion; and he was accustomed to say, that it was ordinarily a bad sign not to have some particular feeling of devotion on such solemnities. He had also the very greatest reverence for holy relics. He did not generally carry them about his person, nor would he easily permit his penitents to do so, because it often happens that they are not treated with becoming respect, and also lest they should be injured in course of time by the neglect of those into whose hands they

might fall afterwards. He was not, however, altogether opposed to their being kept in a room; for he himself had a reliquary in his room, which he treated with great reverence and care. After the Saint's death, this came into the hands of Baronius, and God vouchsafed to grant some special graces by means of it. Antonio Franchi, a clerk regular of the Minori at Rome, was so ill that the physicians looked upon him as a dead man, and he had already received the Viaticum, when Cesare Baronius went to visit him. He carried with him this reliquary, and touched him with it, and then for his greater consolation left it with him. When night came on, the invalid, fearing lest the reliquary should be broken, put it aside; but he presently began to feel such terrible distress that he took it again and said a Pater and Ave, praying the Lord by His mercy and the intercession of the blessed Philip, to whom he had a great devotion, to dispose of him as might be for His own greater glory. While saying these prayers he fell asleep, and when he awoke in the morning he had no feeling of illness, but in a short time left the house perfectly well.

Philip gave evidence of this reverence for holy relics in a striking manner, in the translation of the bodies of the holy martyrs Papias and Maurus. When our church was completed, so far as the fabric was concerned, Cardinal Cusano, one of Philip's spiritual children, and most tenderly beloved by him, wishing to remove the high altar at S. Adriano in the Campo Vaccino, his titular church, in order to erect one more beautiful and magnificent, found beneath it the bodies of the holy Martyrs Flavia Domitilla, Nereus, Achil-

leus, Marius, Martha, Papias and Maurus,<sup>1</sup> which had been translated to this Church of S. Adriano by Gregory IX. from the title of S. Equizio, that is, from the Church of S. Martino de' Monti, where they had been deposited in the time of Sergius II. All these holy relics were enclosed in three marble coffers, on which their names were inscribed, and on that of Saints Papias and Maurus were the words, *In hoc loco requiescunt corpora SS. Martyrum Papiæ et Mauri*. Philip was present at the discovery of the relics, and occupied himself with the most eager devotion and sensible sweetness in opening the coffers, collecting and arranging the bones of the holy martyrs, kissing and contemplating them, and gathering the sacred dust, nor could he restrain himself from giving signs of the immense delight he felt in touching and handling the relics. As he showed a great desire to possess some of these holy bodies, the Cardinal, who loved him so much, determined to gratify him by translating at his own expense the bodies of the two holy martyrs Papias and Maurus, from S. Adriano to our Church of S. Maria and S. Gregorio in Vallicella, and obtained permission to do so from Sixtus V.<sup>2</sup>

On the 11th of February, 1590, the chest which contained the holy bodies was opened, and a portion of them left at S. Adriano. The heads were also taken out, the chest closed again, and sealed in due form, and then both the chest and the heads were

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Memorie del Titolo di Fasciola e Discussione sul valore degli Atti de' SS. MM. Flavia Domitilla, Nereo ed Achilleo*, 8vo, Roma, 1880 [by P. GIUSEPPE LAIS of the Roman Oratory]. The Feast of the Holy Martyrs is celebrated at Chiesa Nuova on 12th May.

<sup>2</sup> The Feast of SS. Papias and Maurus, Patrons of the Roman Oratory, is kept as a Double of the 1st class on 29th January at Chiesa Nuova.

brought in most solemn procession to our church of Santa Maria in Vallicella, with a numerous attendance of clergy, and a vast concourse of people. Ten Cardinals went to the door of the church to meet the holy treasures: Cardinal Gesualdo, Bishop of Porto,<sup>1</sup> Cardinal Paleotto, Bishop of Albano,<sup>2</sup> Cardinal Pinello of S. Lorenzo in Panisperna,<sup>3</sup> Cardinal Aldobrandino, Grand Penitentiary, and afterwards Clement VIII.,<sup>4</sup> Cardinal della Rovere of S. Pietro in Vincoli,<sup>5</sup> Cardinal Gonzaga of Santa Maria del Popolo,<sup>6</sup> Cardinal di Camerino of Saints Peter and Marcellinus,<sup>7</sup> Cardinal Frederick Borromeo, afterwards Archbishop of Milan,<sup>8</sup> Cardinal Cusano of S. Adriano,<sup>9</sup> and Cardinal Pepoli of Saints Cosmas and Damian.<sup>10</sup> When the holy bier arrived at the church, Cardinal Cusano, by order of Sixtus V., consigned the relics of the martyrs to Philip, in the presence of the Cardinals. Philip received them with such joy and exultation that he could not contain himself. The usual flutterings of his heart came on, he leaped, and showed his intense delight by extraordinary movements of his whole body. The relics were deposited on a richly adorned altar erected for the purpose in the middle of the church, where they remained for four days to

<sup>1</sup> ALFONSO GESUALDO, cr. Cardinal 1561, d. 1603.

<sup>2</sup> GABRIELE PALEOTTO, cr. Cardinal 1565, d. 1597.

<sup>3</sup> DOMENICO PINELLO, b. 1559, cr. Cardinal 1585, d. 1611.

<sup>4</sup> IPPOLITO ALDOBRANDINO, b. 1536, elected Pope 1592, d. 1605, absolved Henry IV., King of France.

<sup>5</sup> GIROLAMO DELLA ROVERE, b. 1528, cr. Cardinal 1586, d. 1592.

<sup>6</sup> SCIPIONE GONZAGA, b. 1543, cr. Cardinal 1587, d. 1593.

<sup>7</sup> MARIANO PIERBENEDETTI, b. 1538, cr. Cardinal 1589, d. 1611.

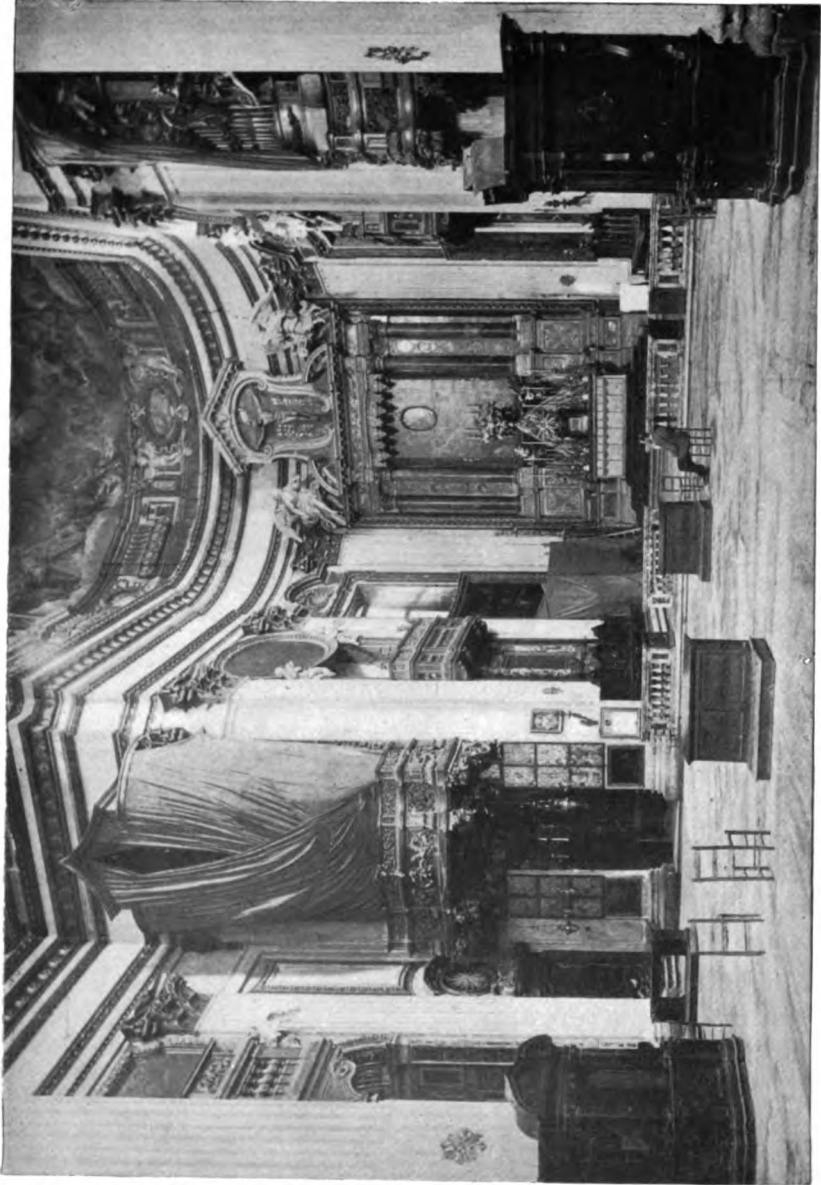
<sup>8</sup> FEDERICO BORROMEO, b. 1564, cr. Cardinal 1587, Archbishop of Milan, d. 1631.

<sup>9</sup> AGOSTINO CUSANO, b. 1542, cr. Cardinal 1588, d. 1598.

<sup>10</sup> GUIDO PEPOLI, b. 1560, cr. Cardinal 1589, d. 1599.







INTERIOR OF CHIESA NUOVA.

satisfy the devotion of the people. They were then deposited in the sacristy; and as a mark of reverence and veneration, Philip commanded Antonio Gallonio to write the lives of these martyrs fully and with great diligence, which he did. After the death of the Saint, the relics were placed under the high altar, on the 23rd of May, 1599, the anniversary of the consecration of the church; the heads were enshrined in silver, and are preserved to this day with becoming reverence.

## CHAPTER III

### PHILIP COMMUNICATES DEVOTION TO THOSE WHO CONVERSE WITH HIM

It was one of Philip's admirable gifts, that he not only had devotion and the love of God himself, but by a singular privilege of heaven communicated them also to those who conversed with him. The most lukewarm of his penitents, if they only went frequently to him, were filled little by little with holy fervour; those who went seldom became sensibly more lukewarm in the service of God, and some who fell off from him lost all devotion and spirituality whatsoever.

Lavinia de' Rustici, the first wife of Fabrizio de' Massimi, before she began to confess to the holy father, had no great opinion of him, and even laughed at him; indeed, by her husband's account, she could not endure to hear him mentioned: but one day when she heard him speak of divine things, she felt such a movement of divine love in her heart, that she was all inflamed with a desire to serve Christ. She took Philip for her spiritual father, began to confess and communicate three times a week, growing in contempt of herself, and giving herself up to prayer, in which she was often favoured with divine raptures, and became a person of such piety, that the Saint said of her, that without doubt she was in heaven rejoicing with the angels. Costanza Draghi Crescenzi heard

Philip's mass in our church with Eugenia her servant on the feast of St. Andrew the Apostle, and in a moment they were both of them seized with such a spirit of compunction and such an abundance of tears, that Costanza said to Eugenia, "Do you feel this?" and she answered, "Yes indeed, I do feel it." When they came to reflect upon this circumstance afterwards, they concluded that it was an effect of the devotion which the Saint had obtained for them in his mass. Nero del Nero, who has been already mentioned, suffered very much from distractions in prayer; but he declares that the first time he heard Philip's mass, he experienced such a facility in meditating on what he pleased, that he was quite astonished at himself; and the same happened to him every time that he heard him say mass. Once when the Saint wished to console a person in distress, he said, "I will pray for you, and you shall feel it;" and in fact the person felt himself moved with such an extraordinary fervour, that he came all trembling to acknowledge it as a gift of the Saint.

He communicated such sweetness to those with whom he prayed, that entire hours of prayer seemed to them like moments, and some said they could have remained in prayer with him the whole night through. One day when Simone Grazzini of Florence and Alessandro Salvio of Siena, two of his earliest spiritual children, were praying with him, they felt their hearts filled with such sweetness, that although they prayed a whole hour, it seemed to them to be no time, and they declared that they would willingly have been always praying if they could always have felt what they did then. The same happened many times to

others, and when they mentioned their feelings to the Saint, he would say, "This is the milk which our Lord gives to those who begin to serve Him."

While he was hearing confessions, the fire which burned within his breast was so ardent, that many of his penitents felt their hearts inflamed with the love of God during confession, and especially when he gave them absolution, as he was accustomed in doing so to press them to his breast, which used to impart to them an extraordinary consolation and inexpressible spiritual refreshment and sweetness. This is confirmed by Giovanni Azzina, of Marsico Nuovo, in the kingdom of Naples, who whilst at Rome kept up a familiar and continual intercourse with the holy father. He says, "When I entered his room I began to tremble, and this happened every time I went in; yet I took a delight in going into the presence of this holy old man and kneeling before him; and when he laid his blessed hand upon my shoulder, or pulled my hair or ears, I felt many good desires kindled in my mind, in a way which made me think that a particular grace was descending upon me from heaven, and I immediately ran to the Blessed Sacrament to pray.

The Abate Marco Antonio Maffa, apostolic visitor, gives similar evidence. He says, "Ever since I knew Father Philip intimately, I have venerated him as a Saint, and I frequented his company as much as my duties allowed me. When I confessed to him, and especially whilst he gave me absolution, I felt as if he breathed forth sanctity, and my heart became inflamed as I have described; and then at mass I had a particular devotion and tears; and this never happened to me when I confessed to others. Numberless times

I have told him about my temptations and tribulations, and by his counsel and his prayers I have been tranquillised immediately. Since he went to heaven, whenever I recommend myself with hearty affection to him in my troubles, I receive the remedy instantly, so that I have been many times astonished at it. I have twice said mass in his chasuble, and both times I had a great abundance of tears." Such is Maffa's testimony; and the greater number of those who were familiar with him affirm the same thing.

## CHAPTER IV

### OF PHILIP'S GIFT OF TEARS

ALTHOUGH in this second book we propose to treat only of the virtues of the Saint, reserving the relation of his gifts for the third, yet as the gift of tears is properly a fruit of devotion, it seems most natural to give some account here of the way in which God favoured him in this respect. The love which burned within him sometimes melted his heart so completely, that when any one spoke in his presence of things that bred compunction or tenderness, he immediately burst into tears. In like manner, when he met with a sinner, he considered the state of his soul, and much more the offence done to God by his sins, and straightway his pity was moved, and he would burst out into the most vehement weeping, almost like a child when it is severely punished. Cardinal Frederick Borromeo attests that he witnessed this many times. Two years before his death, he said with tears to a person who he feared was in a delusion, "Old as I am, I will still take the discipline for you."

The Saint once discovered that a young man of noble family did not accuse himself with sincerity in his confessions to his ordinary confessor, but concealed some sins through shame. This youth was one day in the Saint's room, where he often went out of devotion. There was no other person present, and

Philip, fixing his eyes upon him, began to weep most tenderly, and at the same time gained for the sinner such a softening of heart, that he too was constrained to shed tears, and both of them remained for a long time unable to speak. Then the Saint exhorted him in the midst of his sobs to enter into himself, and make a sincere confession, and the young man, more and more moved, made up his mind to acknowledge to his confessor all that he had hitherto kept back, recommending himself earnestly to the prayers of the Saint, who embraced him, and consoled him with his usual sweetness and charity. But the tender heart of Philip had not yet had sufficient vent; he retired into a room alone, and there giving free course to his sighs and tears, wept abundantly. The penitent then made a general confession to his ordinary confessor; after which he returned to the Saint, and told him of the confession he had made, when Philip said, "My son, although you have not confessed your sins to me, I know them all, one by one, for God has revealed them to me." Then he added, "You have changed your look now, and have got a good countenance," an expression he often used when sinners returned from a state of sin to the grace of God. The penitent recommended himself again to his prayers, and begged him to obtain for him more compunction and sorrow for his sins; and at the very moment he made this request he felt such abundance of contrition and grief come into his heart, that he could not have wished for more; yet before he had conversed with the Saint, he did not so much as know what compunction and devotion were.

When Philip spoke of divine things, it was not long



before the tears came into his eyes, and that in such abundance that he was often obliged to desist from speaking, or to change the conversation; so that sometimes when he was preaching or speaking familiarly on spiritual matters, he would insert some example, or some philosophical saying, a thing which otherwise he was not accustomed to do. He once went to the vineyard of Patrizio Patrizi with Cesare Baronio, Giovan Francesco Bordini, Tommaso Bozio, and some others of his penitents, and after dinner, at the hour at which the sermons were generally preached in our church, he commanded Tommaso Bozio to make an extempore discourse, so that they might not altogether lose the fruit of the word of God. When Tommaso had finished, the Saint wished to add a few words in confirmation of what he had said. But he had scarcely opened his mouth before he began to tremble from head to foot, and to weep so vehemently that he could not utter a word. Indeed this was so common with him when he wished to speak of the things of God, that if he wanted to continue his remarks, it was absolutely necessary for him to betake himself to some worldly illustration or cool philosophic argument, as it were to distract him and quench the excess of his fervour.

In reading the Lives of the Saints, he sometimes shed tears at every word. A prelate one day found him weeping, and asked him why he did so. Philip, to hide the real cause, said as if in joke: "What! may I not weep, who am left a poor orphan without father or mother?" Another time, Angelo da Bagnarea, entering his room unexpectedly, found him reading the Lives of the Holy Fathers, and shedding floods

of tears. Angelo asked him why he was weeping; he answered: "Because this Saint whose life I am reading left the world to serve God, and I have done no good, and every one is better than I am;" and then he added: "O Angelo, if you were one day to see me scourged through Rome, you would say, 'Ah! look at that fellow Philip, who pretended to be so spiritual, give it him well.'" And saying this he wept again through the desire he had of such mortifications.

When he spoke or read of our Saviour's Passion, and particularly at mass during Holy Week, he was melted like wax before the fire; and this was the reason why, many years before his death, he left off discoursing in public. For one day when he was speaking of the Passion, he was surprised by such an extraordinary fervour, that he began weeping and sobbing; he could hardly get his breath, he trembled all over, and the seat and the platform on which it stood, shook as if some one had rocked them with both hands. He made violent attempts to distract himself, and pulled his beard several times; but not being able to repress the impetuosity of his feelings, he was obliged to come down from his seat and leave the church. As this occurred to him several times, and he was unsuccessful in his endeavours to restrain himself, he determined not to discourse any more in public; he often pretended however that he had left off because he had no talent for preaching; and if any one objected that he used to preach when the Oratory began, he said that at the beginning there were but few to take part in it, and therefore God supplied him with ability for

the time, but as the number had now increased, that assistance would not be given to him.

At other times, when he was reading or meditating on the Passion, he was seen to turn as pale as ashes, and his eyes filled with tears, so that it moved every one to devotion merely to look at him. At length he was unable even to converse in private on this subject; for often if he only heard the Passion named, he was so overwhelmed with grief that he became motionless and speechless. He went one morning to dine with the Cardinal of Vercelli in the refectory of Santa Prassede, and when the repast was over, and they had retired into a large room, the Saint, at the request of the Cardinal, proposed a spiritual question, making those who were present give their opinions upon it in the form of a conference. At the end when, in summing up the opinions that had been given, he began to speak of the love with which Christ had suffered for us, he was so overcome with tears and sighs that he could not speak a word more; and whilst he was making an effort to master himself, the Cardinal, seeing how much he suffered, intimated to him that he need not go on.

Another time, when he was ill, they brought him some drink; he took the glass in his hand, but before putting it to his mouth, began to weep most bitterly, and trembling all over, said aloud: "Thou, my Christ, Thou upon the cross wert thirsty, and they gave Thee nothing but vinegar and gall to drink, and I am in bed with so many conveniences, and served by so many gentlemen who stand around me;" and repeating this, the tears streamed from his eyes, and he could not swallow the beverage in spite of his efforts

to do so. One morning in Holy Week, when he was reading the Passion in the church of S. Girolamo, he felt himself being carried away, and began to make violent efforts to distract his attention, stretching the altar-cloth and pulling out a watch and some keys. This was successful for a time, but when he came to our Lord's death, he broke out into lamentations and tears, causing admiration and tenderness in the bystanders: and he had the greatest difficulty in finishing the mass.

When he gave communion to his spiritual children, he sometimes wept so bitterly that he could hardly communicate them; and when he was giving the Blessed Sacrament to them, and they saw him with his face all bathed in tears, many confessed that they felt themselves made partakers of his spirit, so great was the devotion which they conceived by simply looking at him. The holy man took such delight in hearing the Divine Office sung, and listened with such sweetness, that his heart melted within him, and his eyes streamed with tears. He was often seen at compline or matins in the choir of the Dominicans, with his clothes wet with tears. Whenever he saw his persecutors he was instantly moved to compassion for the delusion under which they laboured, and forthwith began to weep. In a word, his heart was so tender, that it laid hold of the slightest occasion in spiritual matters, and found in it an excuse for holy tears. His weeping was so continual that it passed for a miracle that he had not lost his sight, which nevertheless remained so good to the age of eighty years at which he died, that he hardly ever used spectacles, though he kept several pairs about him, for his amusement,

as he used good-humouredly to say, rather than for any need he had of them. After his death it pleased God to use these spectacles as instruments of many miraculous favours. Sister Lucia Mazzani, a nun at Santa Lucia in Silice, was afflicted with a terrible headache, for which she could find no remedy. Overcome with pain, she flung herself upon her bed, and seeing a pair of the Saint's spectacles near her, she put them on with faith and devotion, and immediately the pain ceased.

Although Philip had this gift of tears in such an eminent degree, his humility did not allow him to have any great esteem for it in his own case. He used to say, "Why, even bad women weep easily for any little thing, and that does not make them saints." He often repeated that perfection does not consist in these outward things, and that tears are no sign that a man is in the grace of God.

## CHAPTER V.

### OF PRAYER

ONE of the principal means by which Philip acquired such love and charity towards God, was the exercise of prayer, for which he had so great an affection, that all the practices he instituted in his Congregation tended to this one end; and the very name of the Congregation of the Oratory sprang from it. From his boyhood the servant of God gave himself up to prayer, and acquired such a habit of it, that wherever he was, stirring or still, his mind was continually lifted up to heavenly things, truly fulfilling the counsel of the apostle, *Pray without ceasing*. His heart, in short, was so used to prayer, that it was easier for him to elevate his mind to God than for men of the world to take thought for earthly things. Thus it happened many a time that while his room was full of people, and different matters were being discussed, he could not refrain from lifting up his eyes and hands to heaven, or breaking out into a sigh, although he was very watchful to avoid doing such things in the presence of others.

If any one entered his room suddenly, he would most probably find him rapt in prayer, so that when spoken to, he would make some answer which was nothing to the purpose, and would then have to shake himself or walk up and down the room before he

came to himself. When he went out he was for the most part so abstracted, that it was necessary for some one to admonish him every time he was saluted, or had to salute any one. Sometimes it was necessary to pull him by his clothes, in order to bring him to himself, and then he would make a gesture as if just roused from a deep sleep. He quite did violence to himself in order to look like other men; and in spite of his efforts, if he gave way to his habit of prayer in the most trifling degree, he immediately became totally immersed in contemplation. Once after an audience with Gregory XIII., he said to Father Antonio Gallonio, and Francesco della Molaro, who had been waiting outside for him, "I have committed a folly; I was abstracted when I entered the chamber of his Holiness, and got close up to his seat without knowing he was there, or so much as taking off my beretta."

In the afternoon it was necessary to distract him, lest the continual tension should be prejudicial to his health. Very often from the same cause he was unable to sleep; and then he used to call Father Antonio Gallonio, and say to him, "Antonio, if you wish me to go to sleep, you know what you must do; give me some book that I do not like," meaning that he was to try by some means to divert him from his vehement application to prayer. Thus it was truly his own experience which he used to express in the third person;—that "a soul really enamoured of God, comes to such a pass as to be forced to cry out, Lord! let me sleep," and again, that "he who could not pray just after dinner did not look as if he had the true spirit of prayer."

He always had recourse to prayer before transacting any business, especially if it was of importance; and such was the confidence in God which he thus gained, that he would say, "As I have time to pray, I have an assured hope of obtaining from our Lord whatever favour I ask." Sometimes he conceived so great a confidence, that he would say, "I wish such a thing to turn out in this way, and such a thing in that way," and so it would turn out in the event.

Notwithstanding that owing to this habit his whole life might be called one continuous prayer, Philip had certain fixed hours for this exercise. In the summer, every morning and evening, when he was not hindered by some important business or pious work, he retired for this purpose to the highest part of the house, whence he could see the sky and the open country. When he was at S. Girolamo he had a platform raised upon the roof, and when he came to the Vallicella he had a small gallery made high up in the house, where he secluded himself for prayer. In the latter years of his life, he used to go upon the roof of the church, and there spend many hours in spiritual exercises. If he was called during these times, he went down immediately to the person who had asked for him, saying that this was not really leaving prayer, but only leaving Christ for Christ, that is, as he explained, depriving ourselves of spiritual sweetnesses in order to gain souls to Christ. As soon as he had finished the business for which he had been called, he returned upstairs and went on with his meditation; and he used to say that he found no distraction from the interruption, but on the contrary felt himself more



inflamed with divine love, and more recollected, from having been engaged in works of charity. In winter he made his prayer a little after the Ave Maria, and continued it for two or even three hours, with a little lamp before his crucifix, darkened on the side towards himself, so as to throw all its light on the figure. In order to be punctual at his morning prayer, before going to sleep he placed at the head of his bed a watch, on the face of which he could tell what o'clock it was by merely touching it, a figure of our Lord detached from the cross, and his beads, so that all was ready for him to begin praying as soon as he awoke; and he did not usually sleep more than four, or at the most five hours.

Sometimes, if any one had seen him go to bed late, and yet found him risen early in the morning, he would say: "I slept very little last night;—what do you mean, what do you mean?" Then if the other answered, "Father, you have been praying," he would reply, "This is not the time to sleep, for Paradise is not for sluggards," or something of the kind. When he was hindered during the day, he subtracted the time from his rest, and doubled his vigils. He repeatedly said: "I did not sleep at all last night, for I was hindered yesterday, and I had to make it up during the night;" and if nature was sometimes weighed down by want of rest, he kept himself awake by knotting and unknotting a cord. At some seasons of the year, as at the more solemn feasts, and in urgent spiritual necessities, public or private, he gave himself up more than ordinarily to prayer; but above all during Holy Week, when he was accustomed, for many years, to remain in prayer at the Sepulchre from after mass on Thursday morn-

ing until Good Friday, taking no food, and never stirring from the place.

He recited the divine office with the greatest devotion, and when he said it alone was almost immediately absorbed in contemplation. On this account he recited it for the most part in company, as he would scarcely ever have been able to finish it by himself. He generally said it with his eyes shut, and his face raised towards heaven, and never made the least movement of his body; yet he wished to have the Breviary open, and took care that not the slightest error was made, even though it were only of a syllable. He warned others specially not to say the hours without reading them, particularly when saying office alone, because it is easy to make mistakes in them. When he was almost eighty years old, Gregory XIV., in consideration of his continual infirmities and habitual abstraction, gave him leave to say, instead of the office, either a rosary or some other prayer even shorter still; yet he would never avail himself of this privilege, but always said his office; and when he was so ill as to be unable to do so, he had it read to him, listening with great devotion, and with such attention, that if any one made a mistake he interrupted him immediately, correcting him either by a sign or a word, although, to any one who saw him so abstracted, it would have seemed that he was attending to anything rather than to the office.

To prayer Philip joined the reading of spiritual books, and particularly of the Lives of the Saints, saying there was nothing so well fitted to excite devotion as this. The books with which he was most familiar were the Collations of John Cassian,—though he used

to say they ought not to be read indiscriminately by all,—the Imitation of Christ, the Life of St. Catherine of Siena, and above all, that of the Blessed John Colombini, the works of Father Luis de Grenada, and the Quiver of Divine Love by Serafino da Fermo. He generally read every day a chapter of the Lives of the Holy Fathers, and of Lippoman's Lives of the Saints. Of the different books of Holy Scripture, he had a particular liking for the Epistles of St. Paul; but in order to make his reading of them fruitful, he read slowly and pausingly, and when he felt himself moved by what he read, went no further, but stopped to ponder the text; when the feeling subsided he resumed his reading, and thus went on with passage after passage. It was a general maxim of his, especially for the members of his own Congregation, and for others who are called to minister the Word of God, that both for prayer and for study they should read chiefly the authors whose names begin with S., that is, St. Augustine, St. Gregory, St. Bernard, and other Saints.

He was anxious that people should not go from prayer wearied and sickened, but rather with sweetness and a desire to return to it; and therefore he used to teach all, but especially those who could not make prolonged meditations, often to lift up their minds to God in ejaculatory prayers, a few of which we have thought it not out of place to subjoin, some in Latin and some in the vernacular.

#### LATIN EJACULATIONS

*Cor mundum crea in me Deus, et spiritum rectum  
innova in visceribus meis.*

*Deus in adiutorium meum intende: Domine ad  
adjuvandum me festina.*

Doce me facere voluntatem tuam.

Domine, ne te abscondas mihi.

Domine vim patior; responde pro me.

Ego sum via, veritas, et vita; dixit Dominus.

Fiat voluntas tua sicut in cœlo, et in terra.

Jesu, sis mihi Jesus.

Omnis vallis implebitur, et omnis mons, et collis humiliabitur.

Verbum caro factum est, (to free me from the flesh).

Ne nos inducas in tentationem.

Ne reminiscaris, Domine, iniquitatum mearum, (for Thy most holy Passion's sake).

Quando te diligam filiali amore?

Sancta Trinitas, unus Deus, miserere nobis.

Tui amoris in me ignem accende.

Maria mater gratiæ, mater misericordiæ, tu nos ab hoste protege, et hora mortis suscipe.

Assumpta Maria in cœlum, gaudent Angeli.

EJACULATIONS IN THE VERNACULAR

I know Thee not yet, my Jesus, because I do not seek Thee.

My Jesus, what shall I do if Thou dost not aid me?

My Jesus, what can I do to please Thee?

My Jesus, what can I do to fulfil Thy will?

My Jesus, give me grace to serve Thee, not for fear, but for love.

My Jesus, I would fain love Thee.

I distrust myself, but I trust in Thee, my Jesus.

My Jesus, I can do no good without Thy help.

My Jesus, I wish to do nothing but Thy most holy Will.

My Jesus, I have never loved Thee yet, but I would fain love Thee now.

I shall never love Thee if Thou dost not help me, my Jesus.

I would fain love Thee, my Jesus, but I know not how.

I seek Thee and do not find Thee, my Jesus.

My Jesus, if I did but know Thee, I should also know myself.

If I should do all the good in the world, what would it be worth after all, O my Jesus?

I shall fall, my Jesus, if Thou uphold me not.

My Jesus, if Thou wouldst have me, clear away all the hindrances which keep me from Thee.

My Lord, I wish to learn the road to Heaven.

My Jesus, without Thy help I know not what to say or do.

My Jesus, if Thou help me not, I am ruined.

O my Jesus, grant that I may never offend Thee.

O my Blessed Lady, give me grace ever to remember Thee.

He used also to teach his children to say, *Deus in adjutorium meum intende: Domine ad adjuvandum me festina*, or any other of the above ejaculations, sixty-three times, in the fashion of a rosary, just as we have explained with regard to those to our Lady. Father Francesco Zazzara said that the Saint used to praise most highly these ejaculatory prayers, and used to teach them to him at different times of the year, making him say one at one time and another at another, and that he gained immense help from them. It is also said that he suggested to some of

his penitents to say forty-nine *Pater Nosters* and *Ave Marias* every day from Holy Saturday till Pentecost, declaring that this was an excellent devotion for obtaining graces from God.

Thus did Philip train himself and his disciples in the practice of prayer, to which indeed he exhorted all, according to their health and circumstances, persuading them to meet every evening for it in the Little Oratory, as we have related at some length before. But not content with this, he introduced mental prayer in common into many of the principal houses of Rome, so that fathers and mothers of families retired into their Oratories every evening with their household and prayed after the order and method which is observed in our Oratory. Indeed there were some who not only adopted this custom of prayer, but also as much of community life as was possible in their circumstances.

Philip's maxims on the subject of prayer were numerous; and although they were common sayings, and were used by St. Bernard, Cassian, and others, yet as they were very familiar to him, and his penitents had them continually in their mouths, and quoted them as his, we shall likewise give them as his, as we propose to do in the case of his maxims relating to the other virtues of which we shall have occasion to speak in the course of his life.

First of all then, he used to say that a most excellent means to learn how to pray, is to recognise ourselves as unworthy of so great a gift, and to throw ourselves entirely into the arms of the Lord, who will teach us how to pray; also that the true preparation for prayer is to exercise ourselves in mortification;

for to desire to give ourselves to prayer without mortification is like a bird trying to fly before it is fledged. Hence, when one of his penitents asked him to teach him how to pray, he replied, "Be humble and obedient, and the Holy Ghost will teach you." He used also to say that no one could arrive at the contemplative life, who had not first diligently exercised himself in the active life. He instructed all, but especially those who were beginners in the spiritual life, that it is a great help to prayer, to read often devout books and the Lives of the Saints; adding however that they were not to read out of curiosity, or in a hurry, but with pauses, and a little at a time, stopping awhile whenever they found themselves moved to compunction or devotion. He said that we ought to obey the spirit which God gives in prayer; and when, for example, He draws us to meditate on the Passion, we ought not to go on trying to meditate on some other mystery. Also that when we go to communion, we ought to follow the spirit we had in our prayer, and not cast about for new thoughts. He said that when we have begun to ask some favour from God, we ought not to leave off praying, simply because He delays to grant it, but still strive to obtain it by the same means. He used to add that when a spiritual person experiences great calmness in praying for any grace, it is a good sign that God either has granted, or will soon grant the petition.

He exhorted his children to desire to do great things for God, and not to be content with ordinary goodness, but to wish to surpass, if it were possible, even St. Peter and St. Paul in sanctity and love; for

though it be not possible for man to attain this, it is at least well to effect in holy desires what we cannot accomplish in act. No one, moreover, ought to think he has done any good, or be contented with the degree of perfection to which he may have arrived, however high it be, because Christ has given us the form of our perfection in putting before us that of the Eternal Father, "Be ye perfect, even as your heavenly Father is perfect."

He recommended his penitents, when engaged in prayer, not to fix their eyes too intently on pictures and images, or gaze at them for long together; for this, said he, not only hurts the head, but opens the way to illusions, as well through the weakness of the sight, as through the machinations of the devil. In the time of spiritual dryness he advised as an excellent remedy that we should picture ourselves as beggars in the presence of God and of the Saints, and go as such from one Saint to another, to ask spiritual alms of them, with the same urgency as beggars in the streets. He said it was sometimes well to do this even in a bodily way, going first to the church of one Saint, and then to the church of another, to ask this holy alms.

He recommended all, but particularly beginners, to meditate on the Four Last Things, and he used to say that he who does not go down into hell when he is alive, runs a great risk of going there when he is dead. He admonished his subjects never to abandon the evening prayer and discipline at the Oratory; he exhorted all to recommend themselves to the prayers of others; and when any one asked his prayers, he not only used to pray for him himself, but got others to do the same. To express the necessity of prayer, he



said that a man without prayer was an animal without reason. His physicians once forbade his making mental prayer on account of his health, and though he strove to obey, yet as almost his whole time was given to it, he could not exist without it, and he said to Gallonio, who was with him, "Ah me! Antonio, I seem to myself to have become a beast!" Lastly, he declared that there is nothing which the devil fears so much, or so much tries to hinder as prayer. In this matter Philip was so highly privileged and illuminated by God, that he knew when a man had made his prayer in the morning or not.

By the help of these and other instructions, his penitents and disciples made such progress in this exercise, that not religious only, but secular persons, artisans, merchants, physicians, lawyers, and courtiers, reached a high degree of spirituality under his direction, and became such men of prayer, as to receive therein extraordinary favours from God, leading, in the midst of their temporal occupations, a life as pure and devout as the most fervent religious in their monasteries.

## CHAPTER VI

### OF PHILIP'S CHARITY CONCERNING THE SALVATION OF SOULS

FROM Philip's burning love of God there sprang up in his breast the most ardent longings of charity towards his neighbour; so that in his desire to bring back sinners into the right path, he longed, even to extreme old age, to suffer and to take severe disciplines for them: and he looked upon the misdeeds of others and wept for them as if they were his own. His fervent zeal never grew weary of labouring for the conversion of souls; and he allured them to the service of God with such dexterity, and such a winning art, that they themselves were astonished at it; for he enticed them in such a way, that those who came to him once seemed as if they could never leave him. He accommodated himself so well to the character of each one in particular, that the saying of the apostle was literally fulfilled in him: *I became all things to all men, that I might save all.* In order to keep them, and at the same time to gain others, he would sometimes with modest gaiety press them to sup with him at S. Girolamo, where his frugal table was seasoned with spiritual conversation. It was astonishing how this bound them together as if they were so many brothers, and increased more and more their affection and reverence towards the Saint. If

great sinners, and persons with inveterate habits of vice fell into his hands, at first he only required of them to abstain from mortal sins, and then little by little conducted them to that height of virtue which he had in view.

A penitent went to confess to him, who was so deeply immersed in a particular sin that he fell almost every day. The Saint gave him no other penance than to come to confession immediately after each fall, and never to wait for a second misfortune. The penitent obeyed, and Philip always gave him absolution, simply renewing the same penance, and by this one means gave him such real assistance, that in a few months he was entirely free, not only from that sin, but from many others besides, and in a short time attained such perfection, that the holy Father himself declared he had become an angel.

With similar sweetness he converted a dissolute youth, by only begging him to say the *Salve Regina* seven times a day, and then to kiss the ground, repeating, "To-morrow perhaps I may be dead." The youth obeyed him, and in a short time began to lead a most excellent life, and fourteen years after died with signs of great devotion.

Another, called Domenico Saraceni, of Collescepoli, went to confession to the Saint; he had always been accustomed, at home, to give something to his confessor; and when he had finished his confession, finding that he had no money about him he said, "Pardon me, father; I have brought no money with me." Philip smiled and said, "Come now, instead of the money you were going to give me, promise that you will return to me next Saturday." The penitent

returned, and after a little time, became so taken with Philip's sweetness, that he put himself under his direction, and became a very pious man, going to confession and communion at least once a week.

In the year 1562, a youth named Giovanni Tommaso Arena of Catanzaro went very often to the sermons at S. Girolamo. It was however more to make game of the exercises, than with any serious intention of turning to God. Some of the brothers of the Oratory perceived this, and being indignant at his conduct, mentioned it to the holy father, in order that he might apply some remedy. "Have a little patience," he answered, "and do not be afraid." Giovanni Tommaso still went on turning the frequenters of the Oratory into ridicule, without showing any signs of amendment. The Saint however would not allow a word to be said to him. The good father's patience was not in vain. Little by little the youth was softened by the word of God and Philip's incessant prayers. He began to reflect upon his misconduct, and conceived such contrition that he gave himself up entirely into Philip's hands, and grew so fervent, that by the holy father's counsel he entered into the order of St. Dominic, and died a holy death during his noviciate.

A young Neapolitan named Pietro Focile, a man of irregular life, and much given to unseasonable jesting and buffoonery, was brought one day to the exercises at S. Girolamo. When he entered, dressed in a whimsical fashion, he perceived that the Saint kept his eyes continually upon him; every look seemed to go through him like a dart, and he felt that Philip was actually reading his secret sins. He heard the discourses and assisted at all the exercises of the Oratory.

that day; and they took such hold of him, that he seemed to have suddenly changed his nature, and become a different man. When he went out, his companions asked him what had happened to him, for he did not seem like the same person. A week passed, and the work was meanwhile going on in his heart, and at last he determined to make a good confession. He went to S. Girolamo, and placed himself near the Saint's confessional in order to confess; but Philip pretended to take no account of him, and when he had finished confessing the others, told him to return another time, for that he could not hear him then. He treated him in this way every time he came, and went on putting him off, and bidding him return, for two whole months, always saying to him, "I cannot hear you; come again." But the more the Saint mortified him, the more anxious was Pietro to return to him. At last, when Philip saw the time was come, he heard his confession to his great joy, and from that time Pietro became one of his most fervent penitents. He was once making the visit of the Seven Churches in company with the Saint, and when they were at St. Sebastian's, Pietro wished to kneel down to make his confession, but the Saint said to him, "Get up from here and go to Father Pompeo." He did so, whereupon Philip arose and said to Father Pompeo, "Do not confess this fellow." Pietro then went back to the Saint, who said, "I do not know you." At last however he heard his confession, but would not let him have communion. In the evening he sent for him and consoled him; for what he had done was in order to refine him by means of mortification. Philip prophesied to him that he would die

poor, and the prediction was verified. For although he was very well off at the time, he was reduced to such straits in his old age as to be in actual want of bread. He died a holy death, befitting the life which he had lived ever since he had put himself under the direction of the Saint. Philip also prophesied to him the birth of a son, two days before it took place, and, even while living, occasionally appeared to him in dreams to comfort him in his adversities.

Marcello Ferro, a Roman cleric of noble family, who enjoyed a rich benefice in Rome, used to dress in coloured clothes like a layman, and with great vanity. He once met in the cloister of the Minerva, on the eve of St. Dominic, a young man who was one of Philip's penitents; this youth, entering into conversation with him, said to him, "A Father from S. Girolamo named Philip is in the habit of coming here to Vespers and Compline; Oh! if you were but to speak to him, what a happy thing it would be for you!" The cleric, moved by God, believed the young man's words, and begged him with great earnestness to introduce him to Philip. Meanwhile the Saint entered the church with Giovanni Battista Salviati, Costanzo Tassone, Giovanni Animuccia, and others of his own people. Marcello following them, saw that Philip, as soon as ever he knelt down, covered his face with his hands and began weeping, and that he trembled in his usual way during the whole of Compline, which made him wonder exceedingly. When Compline was over he had a long conversation with Philip, who received him with great cordiality, and invited him to S. Girolamo to hear the sermons. The cleric was touched and promised to go, and after continuing to assist at

the exercises for four or five days, made a general confession, during which Philip kept his eyes fixed on heaven, and trembling in his usual manner, disclosed to the young man the secrets of his heart, and manifested to him his sins. Before giving him absolution he fell upon his neck, and said, "O my son, do not resist the Holy Ghost; God wishes to save you." Marcello went on going to him every day, and though at first he did not leave off dressing in his usual way, Philip never said a word to him on the subject, but only took care by prayer and other means to excite him more and more to compunction. At length, after fifteen or sixteen days the cleric became ashamed of his dress, and abandoned it of his own accord, and then, giving himself up entirely to the holy father, became one of his most intimate and favourite penitents.

By this method he brought back an almost infinite number of sinners to the paths of holiness. They acknowledged that under God they owed their salvation to him, and many of them at the hour of death exclaimed, "Blessed be the day and hour in which I came to know Father Philip!" Others, astonished at the great conversions he effected, said, "Father Philip draws souls as the loadstone draws iron, and no sooner does any one go to confession to him, than he seems to be constrained to go again." On the other hand, Philip was greatly displeased with confessors who made the path of virtue too difficult, especially to penitents recently converted. He could not endure that they should exasperate them with harsh rebukes, and by alarming them at the difficulties of returning to God, make them abandon their confession and

persevere in their sins. He would have them compassionate their penitents, seek to gain them by sweetness and love, condescend to them as far as ever they possibly could, and employ every device of charity to draw them to the love of God.

For the same reason he never inveighed in an exaggerated way against certain vanities in clothes and head-dress, to which women not unfrequently give way. He dissembled as much as he could, so as to bring them the more readily later on to the end he had in view. He said that we must sometimes bear with these defects in others, just as we are obliged against our own will to bear with defects in ourselves; he used to say, "Only let a little devotion gain admittance into their hearts, and then you may leave them to themselves; they will soon do all or more than all you wish." Thus, a lady one day asked him if it was a sin to wear shoes with very high heels; the Saint only answered, "Take care you don't fall." One of his penitents used to wear a collar with an inordinately large ruff: Philip, touching him lightly on the neck, said, "Ah! I should caress you a good deal oftener than I do, if this collar did not hurt my hands." The lady left off her high shoes, and the gentleman took the ruff off his collar.

For the same purpose of drawing souls to the service of God he kept the door of his room always open, so that he was at the service of every one who came; and when any one would have retired through respect, he took him by the hand and drew him in. He reserved neither time nor place which he could call his own, but wished every one to come in, even when he was unwell; and in the evening, even though he had



gone to bed to rest himself, he gave audience to all who came, and would not have any one go away without consolation. He thus attached people to him in such a way that there was nothing they would not most willingly have done for him. He would on no account allow any one to say, "Philip is resting," or, "he does not wish to be disturbed." One day Antonio Gallonio prevented a person from entering, as the hour seemed unseasonable; but when Philip heard of it, he rebuked him severely, and said: "Have I not told you that I wish to have no time or hour for my own?" Another time Francesco Zazzara shut the Saint's room, that he might not be disturbed; Philip, perceiving that some one was waiting for him, called Francesco, and gave him a severe reprimand, in the presence of the person whom he had kept waiting. At other times he would go unexpectedly into the room of some father, where he thought there might be some one waiting for him; and if it was so he would sharply rebuke those whose business it was to have told him. Nothing gave him greater displeasure than to hear that any one had been inconvenienced by having to wait for him. On one occasion some persons said to him, "Father, do not make yourself so common." He answered, "I tell you, that those of my penitents who are now the most spiritual, are just those whom I have gained to the Lord by laying myself out even at night for their conversion; and rest assured that nothing brings so much consolation and sweetness to souls that love God, as leaving Christ for Christ."

But Philip was not content with staying in the church to hear confessions, and receiving in his room all who chose to come to him, though by these means he



CORRIDOR LEADING TO ST. PHILIP'S ROOM,



reaped an abundant harvest of souls. He never spared himself in any other kind of toil, whatever it might be, so long as it was in the service of souls. He thought nothing of rain or wind, heat or cold, or risks of any sort, though they involved life or reputation, if he could but convert a sinner and draw a soul to Christ.

He was once informed that a youth at court was in great danger of being assassinated because of a lady of high rank in Rome, and that although several prelates had done all in their power, they could not turn the young man from his perverse intention. Philip sent for him, and with his usual dexterity and patience, induced him to acknowledge his error so fully, that he not only gave up his enterprise, but even abstained from passing the lady's house for two years together. This resolution he kept so faithfully, that in accompanying a great prince in his carriage, which he did frequently, when they came near that street he asked leave to retire: so efficacious were Philip's words, or perhaps rather Philip's prayers.

In fine, he was all things to all men. He suited himself to the high and the lowly, to the young and the old, subjects and prelates, learned and ignorant. He received those who were strangers to him as kindly as if they had been his own children, and embraced them with as much love and charity as if he had been long expecting them. When he was called upon to be merry, he was so; if there was a demand upon his sympathy, he was equally ready. He gave the same welcome to all, caressing the poor equally with the rich, and labouring in the service of all to the utmost limits of his power. In consequence of his being so accessible, and so ready to receive all

comers, many went to him every day, and some continued for the space of thirty, nay forty years, to visit him very often both morning and evening; so that his room went by the name of the School of Sanctity, and the Shelter of Christian Mirth.

Although by these ways of his, he reaped great fruit in the conversion and edification of souls, there were not wanting men who censured and severely reproved him, and that not only among the worldly, but among those of excellent and even holy lives. Experience however showed that Philip reaped more fruit by his gentleness than they did by their severity and strictness. Teseo Raspa, a priest and confessor at S. Girolamo, a holy man, but somewhat rigid, did not approve of Philip's gentleness and easiness in the confessional, so unlike his own practice. But although he had many penitents at first, nearly all of them soon abandoned him, whereas Philip's number swelled daily: and it is a fact well worth recording, that some of his penitents, notwithstanding that he only allowed them to come to confession once a week, and very often less frequently still because of their studies or other duties, were more advanced, and better grounded in the spiritual life than the penitents of others.

Yet Philip knew how to employ rigour and severity, when he saw that it was necessary, and acted with a firmness which showed that he was able to rule not only those of his Congregation or penitents of a yielding disposition, but even the most stubborn characters. He was once sent for by the company of the Misericordia to attend a criminal who was going to be executed, and who obstinately resisted all attempts to convert him, though many members of the company,

as well as several religious, had used their utmost endeavours to do so. Philip arrived with Gallonio at the little chapel where the wretched man was screaming like one in despair; he sent out those who were present, and then, in the impetuosity of his spirit, seized the criminal by the collar, and laid him flat on the ground, saying, "Not a word; hold your peace." He had scarcely finished the words, when the prisoner begged to go to confession; and after having confessed twice, resigned himself to death. We have another instance in the case of a young noble, who had unhappily become so entangled in vicious habits, that for a long time the various endeavours made to bring\* him to repentance were all in vain. One day Philip began to reprove him most sharply for his hardness of heart, threatening him with the pains of hell, and putting before him in a vivid picture, the justice of God irritated against him. At length he added, "Well then! I see we must come to facts with you." He made him kneel down in front of him, and rest his head upon his knees. "Look now," said the holy father, "look with your own eyes at the pains which await you down there, in hell!" The youth remained in that position for a short time; then lifting up his head all agitated and trembling, he repented of his sins, made a good confession, entirely changed his manner of living, and persevered in the service of God till his death.

## CHAPTER VII

### PHILIP'S WONDERFUL WAY OF KEEPING YOUNG PEOPLE FROM VICE

PHILIP knew very well that men mostly carry to the grave the sinful habits formed in youth. Hence although he was anxious to turn all kinds of people from sin, he laboured with a special zeal for the conversion and perseverance of young men, sedulously inventing ways of keeping them from offending God, and insinuating into their hearts the desire of virtue. Even when he had reached an advanced age, and his strength was nearly exhausted by his great labours, the holy man was still to be seen going about the streets of Rome with a train of young men, conversing with them on all sorts of subjects according to their different professions, making them affectionate one towards another, and winning their reverence and love towards himself. Sometimes he left his prayers and went down to sport and banter with the young men and others who flocked to him, as we learn from Cardinal Crescenzi, and by his sweetness and the allurements of his conversation, to keep them cheerful and win their souls. He very often took them to some open ground, and there set them playing together at mall or some similar game. He generally began the game himself, but afterwards retired to some thicket or hillock, either to read, or

to meditate on some point of the Passion. For this purpose he usually carried about with him a little book containing nothing but the ends of the four Gospels; although after he had read a little while he was unable to go on, but became motionless and absorbed in contemplation. He used also to appoint some of his tried and experienced penitents, especially at first, to watch over the younger ones, to bring them often to him, and to take care that they did not associate with others who might turn them aside from the good path.

Whenever any of them left off coming to confession or assisting at the Oratory, the same affectionate charity moved him to send for them on some ingenious pretext; and if they had unfortunately swerved from the path of virtue, he was indefatigable in bringing about their return to the service of God, even employing some of his people to seek them out under one excuse or another, and to try every means to win them back to their former good habits, so that sometimes they entered again upon the practice of a devout life with even greater fervour than before.

So well known throughout Rome, and particularly amongst the religious orders, was Philip's wonderful gift of exciting young men to the love of virtue and the desire of perfection, that the Father Superior of the Dominicans at the convent of the Minerva frequently sent him his novices that he might take them out where he pleased for recreation, feeling confident of the fruit they would reap from his conversation. Sometimes he took them to the Seven Churches, particularly at the time of the Carnival, and then they all received Communion, and called



that their Carnival; at other times he went with them to some agreeable spot, where they would stop all day, and dine together. The holy old man took great pleasure in seeing them eat and enjoy themselves; he used to say, "Eat, my children, and do not have any scruple about it, for it makes me fat to watch you." When dinner was over he made them sit down on the ground in a ring round him, and gave them many counsels, telling them the secrets of their hearts, and exhorting them to the practice of all virtues, but especially of perseverance, assuring them that the Divine Majesty had conferred on them one of His greatest benefits in having called them to religion; "and this," he added, "this I say with all my heart," and as he spoke, the novices felt their hearts burn with fervour and with the desire to profit by their vocation, and used to return happy and light-hearted to their convent.

The patience which Philip had with young men, when he was trying to keep them from sin, was something indescribable. He let them make what noise they pleased, even close to his room, and when some of the Fathers complained of their want of discretion, and the youths told Philip of it, he answered, "Let them talk; go you on with your play, and be merry; all I want of you is to keep out of the way of sin." He even made them play at ball in front of his room, that they might not have any occasion to go elsewhere.

A certain Roman gentleman, who often went to visit the Saint, wondering at the uproar the young men made, asked him how he could possibly bear it. Philip answered, "So long as they do not sin they

may chop firewood upon my back.” Long afterwards, a gentleman of high position in the court, who had been intimate with the Saint in his boyhood, said to a friend, with tears in his eyes, “When I was a youth, and confessed to Father Philip, I never committed a mortal sin; but as soon as I left him I gave myself up, wretch that I am! to this licentious life which I am now living.”

He could not bear to see any of his children in low spirits, and directly, he perceived a want of cheerfulness in any of them, he instantly asked him why he was in such a mood as that, and would perhaps give him a box on the ear and say, “Be merry.” He said that his long experience in the direction of souls had taught him that in spiritual matters cheerful men were much more easy to guide than the melancholy. Hence it was that he had a particular and marked leaning to cheerful persons.

The following anecdote is an instance in point. Two Capuchins came to see him, the one an old, the other a young man. Philip looked both of them in the face, and as it appeared to him that the young one was more spiritual than his elder companion, he determined to try if it were so by his usual method of mortification. It happened that the young Capuchin was guilty of a breach of good manners in spitting in Philip’s presence, and the Saint took occasion from it to give him a biting reprimand. He exaggerated the offence, pretended to be in a great passion, and said, “What sort of manners is this! get out of my presence;” after which he took off one of his shoes, and made as though he were going to hit him on the head with it. But notwithstanding all Philip’s words

and gestures, the young religious remained as merry and cheerful as before, and did not show the slightest sign of displeasure, whereas his companion showed by his looks how deeply he felt the mortification, though it had not fallen on him personally. The Saint, not contented with all this, bade the young monk take off his cloak, telling him he was not worthy to wear it; to which the young man replied, "Your Reverence is master; I can go very willingly without my cloak, not only because I am not worthy to wear it, but because I am not cold; and above all, because I have had a very good meal this morning." The Saint then played several other tricks with him, but nothing could disturb his good humour, or tire out his instant obedience. At last Philip looking fiercely at him, sent him away, without testifying the least affection for him, but still the friar was as cheerful and patient as ever. The two religious left the room, but when they had got to the bottom of the stairs, Philip had them called back again, and as soon as ever he saw the younger one, he ran to him, embraced him with the greatest warmth, showed him extraordinary affection, and gave him some blessed beads and other devout things; and as he went away, he said to him, "My son, persevere in your cheerfulness, for this is the true way to advance in every virtue."

But much as he liked cheerfulness, he was far from sanctioning anything like dissipation. On the contrary, he said it was necessary to take great care not to become dissipated, or to give way, as he used to say, to a buffooning spirit; for buffoonery not only renders a man incapable of receiving any additional

spirituality from God, but even roots up what little he may have previously acquired.

He was anxious also to see the young men who were about him always occupied. Sometimes he would bid them sweep out the room, or make the bed over again, or move the table from one place to another. Sometimes he would set them to thread a rosary, or plait garlands of flowers, or read some book; in short he would give one employment to one, and another to another, simply to keep them from idleness, which he hated so much that no one ever found him unemployed.

He wished young people to go to confession very frequently, but not to communicate so often. Not unfrequently he made them prepare for communion with the greatest diligence, bidding them offer up particular devotions for that purpose; and then in the morning when they were going to communion, he would put them off to another time, giving them fresh devotions to perform; and he would go on dealing with them in this way, until he judged it well for them to communicate. The reason he gave for acting thus was that on communion days the devil generally makes greater and more violent assaults than at other times; and often young men do not resist them, and so come at last to do a great injury to the holy Sacrament. He was anxious moreover that they should approach the altar with a great desire for that heavenly food. When they asked his leave to go to communion, he used to answer, “No, no,—‘*Sitientes, sitientes venite ad aquas,*’” “Thirsting, thirsting come ye to the waters.” For the same reason he always liked them to give

him four or five days' notice when they wished to receive communion; and afterwards in order to make them gather greater fruit from the Sacrament, he gave them some extra devotions for a few days, such as saying five *Paters* and *Aves* with their arms extended, or reciting some of the chaplets he had taught them, or something of a similar nature.

During the Carnival he used to set his young penitents to act plays, in order to prevent their going to the Corso or to dangerous comedies. It was for the same purpose that he introduced the pilgrimage to the Seven Churches, and the spiritual conferences in open places, as at Montecavallo, or S. Onofrio, or in any other spot which he found convenient.

In a word, in directing young men, and in keeping them from sin, Philip had a gift peculiarly his own, and one in which few of his time equalled him; and what was most of all to be admired was, that he bestowed such a special care upon each one in particular, that it seemed as if that one were the only penitent he had to guide.

## CHAPTER VIII

### OF THE GREAT CARE WHICH PHILIP TOOK OF HIS PENITENTS WHEN THEY WERE ILL

WHENEVER any of his penitents were ill, he went to visit them continually, not only by day, but even during the night if there were occasion for it. As soon as he entered the room he began to pray for them, and made the bystanders do the same. When they were in extreme danger, he generally stayed with them until they died, or until a favourable turn took place, not unfrequently spending whole nights beside them in prayer. He laboured also with wonderful success in consoling the sick, and in delivering them from the temptations with which the devil usually assails them.

A musician named Sebastian,<sup>1</sup> one of his penitents, and a very virtuous man, was lying at the point of death, when the devil appeared to him all black and frightful, and endeavoured by every possible means to make him despair of his salvation. Sebastian, panic-stricken, began to scream out like one in despair, "O wretched man that I am! would that I had never been born! all hope is past, and I must now go into the burning flames of hell; woe is me! what an unfortunate wretch am I!" He had been crying out

<sup>1</sup> A musician of Castello, companion of Animuccia, who frequently brought him to sing at the Oratory.

in this way for two hours successively, without receiving any consolation, when those who were about him sent for the rector of the parish; but Sebastian would not look at him or listen to him, turning his face the other way disdainfully, and saying that he had no faith in him, that he was lost, and past all hope of salvation. His friends did not know what to do, until at last they thought of sending for the holy father. Philip came, and as soon as he set foot on the threshold of the room, said in a loud voice so that everybody could hear, "What is this?" one of his usual exclamations; he then went up to the bed, laid his hand on the sick man's head, and said, "Do not be afraid." Sebastian was comforted instantly, and began to cry out, "Father Philip is driving the devils away; the devils are flying, Philip is driving them off; O wonderful power of Father Philip! Viva Cristo! Viva Filippo, who has saved me from hell! Viva l' Oratorio!" Then in an outburst of joy, he began to sing the hymns which were sung at the Oratory, and particularly the one which begins, "Jesus! Jesus! Jesus! let every one call on Jesus!" He then raised his hands and eyes to heaven, and said, "Look at the angels, look at the archangels," and naming one by one all the choirs of the angels (the very names of which he never knew before, for he was quite an ignorant man), he gave up his soul to God in Philip's arms, in the month of September, the day before the feast of St. Michael the Archangel.

When Persiano Rosa, Philip's director, was in his last illness, he had to sustain most tremendous assaults of the devil, during which he cried out loudly, "*Tu judica me Deus, Tu discerne causam meam.*" Whilst he

repeated these words he sat up in bed, made the sign of the cross, and threw himself first on one side and then on the other, in the utmost terror. Meanwhile Philip arrived, and Persiano, as soon as he saw him, said, "*Sancte Philippe, ora pro me,*" for so he was accustomed to call him; and then added, "I beg of you to drive away that fierce black dog which is trying to tear me." When Philip heard this, he immediately betook himself to prayer, and exhorted the bystanders to say a *Pater* and *Ave* for the sick man. He had scarcely knelt down before Persiano began to cry out, "Thank God! the dog is going, the dog is running away; see, he has reached the door." Philip then got up, and sprinkled the sick man and the whole room with holy water, on which the devil disappeared altogether, and the following day Persiano passed happily and quietly to a better world.

Gabriello Tana of Modena, a youth of about eighteen, in the service of Giovanni Ricci, Cardinal of Montepulciano,<sup>1</sup> was in his last illness. He was one of Philip's first penitents, and for two years before his illness had given himself up entirely to devotion, confessing and communicating at least twice a week. He was most diligent in works of piety, and especially in visiting the hospitals. He had been confined to his bed for three weeks with a dangerous illness; no treatment seemed to do him the least good, and he was drawing towards the close of his life, when there came upon him a temptation of the devil in the shape of a most anxious desire to get well, together with an inordinate fear and abhorrence of death. The holy father, who

<sup>1</sup> Giovanni, Cardinal Ricci, a native of Montepulciano and countryman of Tarugi, cr. Cardinal 1551, d. 1574.



visited him continually, found him in this state, and asked him how he felt; he answered, "I am in good spirits, because it seems to me that it is not God's Will that I should die this time." He then begged the Saint to pray for him in his mass; that God would give him time to do penance for his sins. The Saint replied, "Well, I will go to S. Pietro in Montorio, and say mass for you in the chapel where the holy apostle was crucified." Gabriello, full of his desire to recover, repeated several times, "Pray to God for me, to grant me time to do penance." The Saint then perceived that this was a temptation, for he had had a revelation of Gabriello's death; he said therefore, "Gabriello, I want you to make me a present of your will, and I will offer it to God at the offertory of the mass, so that if He should desire to call you to Himself, and the devil should want to molest you, you may be able to answer: 'I have no longer any will of my own, I have given it away to Christ.'" Gabriello agreed, and Philip told the bystanders to pray for him, whilst he went to say mass. When he returned to the sick man after mass, he found him entirely changed, and repeating over and over again with great fervour those words of the apostle, "I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ." He took his crucifix in his hand, pressed it to his heart, and with his eyes full of tears tenderly embraced and kissed it, exhorting and encouraging the friends who stood round him, to devote themselves to the service of God in good earnest, and to cast the vanities of the world behind them, and repeating again and again, "This life has become odious to me; I wish to die that I may go to Paradise." Then turning to the Saint, he added, "Up to this time, Father, I

have prayed with the greatest earnestness for my recovery; but now I entreat of you to obtain from our Lord that I may depart out of this miserable life as soon as possible." He continued in these sentiments all the following day, and in the evening, when the Saint was leaving him to return to S. Girolamo where he was then living, the invalid said to him, "My father, I long to go to Paradise; pray for me that my desire may be granted." Philip answered, "And if it should please God that you should suffer this sickness for a long time, would you not submit to His Will?" To which the youth replied, "What do I hear, my father? Do you not know that I have told you many times how I long to go to Paradise to see God, and that I cannot bear to remain in this life? Pray the Lord then that before the fifth hour of the night I may depart." "Well," said Philip, "do not be afraid; you shall be consoled; but meantime I warn you to prepare yourself to make a valiant fight of it, for the devil is going to make repeated assaults on you; remember therefore that you have given your will to Christ, and fear nothing, for He will overcome every peril for you. He then told him, one by one, all the temptations with which the devil would assail him, after which he left him, in order to pray for him without interruption at home. He ordered however some of his own people, and among them Giovanni Battista Salviati, and Francesco Maria Tarugi, not to leave him, but to give him all the assistance in their power, and if anything fresh took place, to let him know; for he had already come four or five times that day to visit him, and comfort him with fervent little exhortations. An hour had scarcely passed

before the devil came to tempt the youth to presumption, making it appear to him that he had merited greatly by his good works, and that his salvation was already secure. The sign of this temptation was, that when he heard the litanies which are usually recited at the commendation of a departing soul, at the words *A morte mala libera eum Domine*, he smiled and shook his head, saying, "He who has Christ in his heart cannot die a bad death." But immediately perceiving the deceit of the enemy, he began to cry out, "Help me, I entreat you, my brothers, help me with your prayers; for what I have just said was a temptation of the devil." He had scarcely discovered and vanquished this temptation before the adversary assailed him with a second, trying to hinder him from pronouncing the Name of Jesus, which he so ardently desired to utter, especially at the moment of death, that he had prayed his friends to remind him at the last. Feeling himself hindered by an internal violence, he cried out, "Help, my brothers, help, for I cannot name It." They asked what it was that he could not name, adding, "Is it the most holy Name of Jesus which the devil will not let you pronounce?" Then Gabriello showed by signs that it was so, and turning to Giacomo Marmita, the Cardinal's secretary, and one of Philip's penitents, he said to him, "Alas! what temptation is this, that I cannot pronounce the Name of Jesus?" and although he pronounced it several times, he still fancied that he could not do so. The bystanders comforted him, and told him to pronounce it in his heart, if he could not with his lips. He was harassed by this temptation for a long time, and a violent perspiration ensued, whereupon they

sent immediately for the holy father. When he arrived, Gabriello became quite cheerful, and pronounced the Name of Jesus with Philip several times, very distinctly, repeating it affectionately and just in the way he wished, whilst the Saint helped him by showing him the crucifix, and as it were putting the most holy Name into his mouth, with words full of tenderness. The devil however would not leave the field, but now tempted him in his faith, insinuating at the same time into his heart a hope that he would be sure to get well. Gabriello turned to Philip and said, “ Help me, father, for I seem not to have faith, and likewise I fancy that I am not going to die.” Philip replied, “ Despise this fresh deceit, my child, and say with me, ‘ I believe, I believe ! ’ ” But although he pronounced these words with the Saint several times most distinctly, he thought that he could not pronounce them properly, or believe in the way he wished. Hereupon Philip ordered the bystanders to recite the *Credo* aloud, and told Gabriello to do so in his heart. After this he knelt down and prayed for him, and immediately the temptation ceased ; indeed the dying man, relieved somewhat of his fears, began to assume a holy boldness, and mocked and triumphed over his adversary, saying, “ I will believe in spite of you ; whether you will or not, I will believe for all eternity.” Thus this new temptation ceased, and through the grace of God Gabriello was left master of the field, though much exhausted. At last, the crafty serpent was driven to his final resource of despair. He appeared to Gabriello, and putting himself in front of him with a fierce and threatening aspect, terrified him in such a manner that his whole countenance changed,

and his eyes, full of terror, wandered here and there distractedly, but found no place on which they could light without horror. In this state of wretchedness he cried out, "Ah unhappy me! how many sins! how many sins! ah me! mercy, O my God! Father, drive away those black dogs that are all round me." Philip laid his hands upon the sufferer's head, and addressing the devil, said, "Hast thou power, thou wicked spirit, to strive against the grace of God? These hands have touched Christ this morning; I command thee therefore in His Name to depart hence, and to leave this His creature at peace." No sooner had he said this than the temptation ceased. He then turned to Gabriello and said, "Be comforted, my son, and say, 'Depart from me, all ye that work iniquity,' and do not be afraid, for if you have sinned, Christ also has suffered and paid for you: enter then, my son, into His Side, and into His most holy Wounds; and fear not, but combat manfully, and you will soon be the conqueror."

He then knelt down at the foot of the bed, and Gabriello full of joy and happiness cried out, "What joy, my brothers, what joy! the dogs are departing; Father Philip is driving them away; see how furiously they fly!" and he pointed with his finger to the place where he saw them. At last he said, "We have won the fight, and you are gone in spite of yourselves; now I can freely pronounce the Name of Jesus!" and thus filled with comfort, Gabriello fixed his eyes steadfastly on a crucifix which one of those present held in his hand, and prayed with such fervour that there was not one in the room who did not shed tears. Presently, turning to those who were beside him, he said to

them, "O my brothers, what things have I seen with these eyes of mine! Now I know for a truth what our father has so often told us, that all the love we give to creatures is so much taken from the Creator; wherefore I entreat you to give all your love to God." Then turning again to Christ, and going on with his prayer, he said, "Let me have the crucifix in my own hands." No sooner had he received it than he began to embrace and kiss it with the greatest affection; and with great fervour of spirit, he slightly raised his head, and lifting up his hand, said in a clearer voice than he had before, "Blessed be Jesus all the world over, blessed for evermore! who shall be able to separate me from His love?" Then repeating the words which Philip had suggested to him, he said in a strong voice, "Depart from me, all ye that work iniquity," and began mocking the evil one with many words until at last Philip, fearing lest by this excitement he should hasten his death, said to him, "No more, my son, no more; let the devil alone; we do him too much honour by talking about him: put all your trust in Christ and in His most Precious Blood, for He it is who has overcome the devil in you; be at peace, and leave Him to act for you." At this command the youth was silent, and Philip made a little address to all who were present, on the love of God and on His goodness. Now that Gabriello had fought so manfully and all the illusions of the devil had disappeared, all present believed from his speaking so clearly and so long together, that he would live till the next day; and this was the opinion of the medical men. The Saint however said, "It will not be so; the instant he moves from his present position he will

die." And so it was; for scarcely half-an-hour afterwards Gabriello turned on his right side, where Philip stood, and pronouncing the Name of Jesus, passed happily out of this life, such beauty remaining on his features that he looked like an angel of Paradise.

Giacomo Marmita, who was mentioned above as secretary of the Cardinal of Montepulciano, was one of the Saint's spiritual children, a man of great learning and prudence, and above all, full of the fear of God. He was attacked by a very sharp fever, with pains in his body, and other sufferings, which brought him to the last extremity. As the moment of his departure drew near, the weakness of the flesh asserted itself, and he began to lament and seemed unable to find any comfort. The Saint, who was there, said to him, "Courage, Messer Giacomo, call on the Lord, and say, '*Deus noster refugium et virtus, adiutor in tribulationibus.*'" to which the sick man replied, "*Quae invenerunt nos nimis.*" Philip began to pray for him, and then went on again consoling him, until in a short time he brought him to a state of the greatest tranquillity and resignation to the Divine Will, and not long afterwards, to the edification of all present, he quietly gave up his soul to God.

Father Niccolò Gigli,<sup>1</sup> a priest of our Congregation, fell grievously ill, and when his death drew near, was much harassed by the devil, but came out of the trial victorious through the prayers of Philip, in the following manner. The holy father was saying mass in the chapel of which we have spoken above, and was praying most earnestly for the sick man, when some of the fathers heard tremendous noises in the house,

<sup>1</sup> See "*Lives of the Companions of St. Philip*," p. 137.

as of rocks or great mill-stones being dragged over the pavement. While this noise was going on, Philip, who was alone in the little chapel praying, called out, and Father Pietro Consolini ran to him to see what he wanted. The Saint said to him, "Make haste and let me know how Niccolò is." He hastened to the sick man and found him with his hands joined and looking up towards heaven, repeating with great fervour, "Let us give thanks to the Lord our God; he came, he has gone, he is conquered." Pietro returned to the Saint, and told him what had passed, on which Philip answered in his usual way, "That is enough, that is enough, that will do." A little while later he went himself to the sick man: as soon as Niccolò saw him, he cast on him a look full of affection, and said, "Ah! my father, why have I not known you long, long since? why so late, O my father?" He had experienced in his combat the efficacy of Philip's prayers, and obtained a vivid knowledge of his sanctity.

Niccolò was a Frenchman; so free was he from all earthly attachments, especially to his relations, that he would not read the letters which they sent him, but threw them into the fire as soon as they arrived. He was a great lover of obedience, and an enemy to idleness; he was also assiduous at the confessional, hearing all sorts of persons without ever growing weary. He was much given to prayer and mortification, and greatly beloved by the holy father, and before he fell ill, foretold the day of his death. He lived twenty years in the Congregation and gave up his soul to God on the 14th of June, 1591, leaving such a reputation for sanctity, that the holy father



used to keep something of his about him as a relic.

Carlo Mazzei, another of Philip's penitents, a little before his death had to sustain most violent assaults of the devil, who appeared to him and endeavoured to drive him to despair, at the same time putting before him all he had said or done in his life. The sick man's only answer was to repeat twice, "I appeal to Philip," at which words the devil immediately lost courage, and disappeared in confusion. The holy father afterwards said, that if the sick man had reasoned with the devil, he would most certainly have been deceived by him; and he declared that the soul of Carlo was gone into a place of safety, adding that he had been delivered from the hands of the evil one by those very words. This incident the Saint used to relate as a proof of the fear which the devil has of our spiritual father.

It was well known among his spiritual children, that when Philip entered a room he used to put the devils to flight by simply saying, "Who is here?" and those present immediately felt themselves freed from their temptations. Many also in their agony saw the devils in visible shapes departing at the appearance of Philip.

But to return to his charity to the sick. He exercised it not only towards his own friends, but towards all, whatever might be their state or condition, and even towards those who persecuted him. Many instances of this will occur in the chapter on the holy father's patience; at present I will only mention one case. A person who had done all the evil in his power to Philip and to one of his penitents, was

dangerously ill. As Philip was returning to the sacristy one morning after saying mass, he said to some who were there, "I have prayed for such an one more than usual." They afterwards learned that the person had been obliged to take to his bed at the very time the Saint was celebrating. So great was the affection which Philip always showed towards this man, that when he spoke of him, he wept through compassion; and God was pleased to tell him of his sickness during his mass in order that he might pray for him.

One of the maxims which Philip gave on the subject of charity to the sick was, that those who visit the sick or dying should not speak much to them, but rather help them with their prayers. Another was, that people should be very cautious in playing the prophet, and predicting that the invalid will die or recover; because he had known some who, having prophesied that a sick man would die, actually took it amiss when he recovered, and were wicked enough to regret the failure of their prophecy. At times the Saint himself regretted that he had prayed for the recovery of some, who when they got well, fell away from the good path and began to lead sinful lives; and he declared that he never would pray again unconditionally for the life of any one. From this rule however he most readily excepted women in labour.

## CHAPTER IX

### PHILIP FREES MANY FROM DIFFERENT TEMPTATIONS AND TROUBLES

PHILIP did not limit his care and solicitude to the bodily and spiritual needs of the sick. Scarcely any one, however tried and afflicted, had recourse to him, who was not freed from his temptations and consoled in his troubles.

Marcello Benci, a gentleman of Montepulciano, and a relation of Cardinal Tarugi, was very much disturbed about a danger in which he was placed of falling into sin. He spoke about it several times to his confessor, Father Angelo Velli, who told him that if he wanted to be rid of it, he must seek a remedy from Father Philip. Marcello, in obedience to this advice, gave the Saint a full account of the temptation, and of the danger in which he was, and recommending himself with much earnestness to his prayers, implored him for the love of God to free him from it. Even during the very time that he was speaking with him, he felt great interior consolation, and the conversation was hardly finished before he found himself entirely set free from the temptation, which never troubled him any more.

Antonio Fantini, of Bagnacavallo, a poor huckster, went to confession to Philip for thirty years successively, during the last twenty of which he confessed

daily, and then died, giving great edification to all who knew him. He was married to a very young wife, and perceiving that a gentleman's servant who used to pass under the window, was in the habit of behaving so as to give him cause for displeasure, warned him not to pass that way again or that he should repent of it. The servant, however, continuing to act as before, Antonio, in a fit of anger, inwardly resolved to assassinate him. He persevered in this intention for three days, when a feast occurred on which he had always gone to confession and communion without fail. He forced himself therefore to go to the holy father, and kneeling down, told him all the behaviour of the servant and his own resolution to murder him. When the Saint had heard it all, he merely put his hand on Antonio's head, and said with a smile, "Go away; God be with you, it is nothing!" No sooner had he said the words than Antonio, who had come distracted with trouble, felt himself all at once filled with joy and lightheartedness, and the temptation wholly gone. Nay, when he met the servant, he was not conscious of the slightest movement of anger towards him; and what is even more strange, the servant never passed in front of his house again.

A youth who had not long been under Philip's direction, could not be persuaded to forgive an injury which he had received. The Saint did all he could to induce him to do so, but his heart seemed only to get harder than ever. One day, finding no other means of any avail, he took up a crucifix, and said to him with great fervour, "Look at this, and think how much Blood our Lord has shed for the love of you; and He not only pardoned His enemies, but prayed

the Eternal Father to pardon them also. Do you not see, my poor child, that every day when you say the *Pater Noster*, instead of asking pardon for your sins, you are calling down vengeance upon yourself?" He then ordered him to kneel down, and repeat after him, at the foot of the crucifix which he held before him, a prayer in which the Saint magnified the hardness and obstinacy of his heart, and showed him what a grievous sin he was committing. The youth knelt down at the Saint's bidding and tried to repeat the prayer, but began to tremble all over and could not pronounce a word. He remained a long time in this state, but at last getting up exclaimed, "Here I am, father, ready to obey you; I pardon every injury I have ever received; your Reverence has only to tell me what you desire me to do, and I will comply with your wish;" and he kept his word.

Pietro Focile, of whom we have already spoken, went one day to make his confession to the Saint, who had several times laid on him some commands which Pietro had never obeyed. On this occasion Philip gave him a severe reprimand, on which the penitent, very much out of humour, said to himself, "Why, what is this? does he think there is no other confessor in Rome but himself?" and went off to confession somewhere else; but no sooner had he done so than there came upon him such a depression of spirits, and uneasiness of conscience, that he could get no rest. Two days passed, and on the third the Saint, in his usual way, sent for him. Pietro recovered his spirits directly he heard that Philip had asked for him; but when he saw him, his heart was so melted that he threw himself at his feet and wept bitterly. Philip

took his head and pressed it to his bosom, and gave him a gentle reproof, to which Pietro replied, "Father, I will never disobey you again, and I promise most positively to perform in deed what I now pledge myself to by word,"—and he went away full of consolation.

Elisabetta Contessa of Città di Castello had a most violent temptation which lasted three or four months, and her confessor, Father Angelo Velli, recommended her to speak to the Saint about it. Philip, as soon as he saw her, cried out, "Ah, poor lady! you have one of the greatest temptations which can beset a spiritual person;" he then laid open to her all her secret temptations one by one. She was overcome with astonishment, for they were things which none but God and her confessor could know. At the end, the Saint laid his hand upon her head, and said to her, "Come now, do not be afraid; I will say mass and pray to God for you;" and trembling in his usual manner, he left the confessional, whilst Elisabetta instantly felt herself freed from the temptation, which never disturbed her again. The next morning while she was in the church, the Saint called her, and said, "Now have I not done you good service?" to which she answered that he had, for that the temptation was already gone: the Saint then added, "Whenever you have need of anything come to me again."

Muzio Achillei, a priest of San Severino in the Marches, when young used to go to confession to the holy father at S. Girolamo della Carità, and had the greatest devotion towards him, because Philip had laid open to him at confession some of the secrets of his heart. From that moment so great was his esteem

for Philip, that even when he returned to San Severino, he did nothing of importance without consulting the Saint by letter, and he had such faith in him that he recommended himself to him while still living as if he were a canonized Saint. Once, during a visit to Rome, he was on the point of falling from a rock into the Tiber, where no one would have seen him or would ever have known what had become of him; he recommended himself with all his heart to Philip, who, as we have said, was still living, and in an instant he found himself rescued from his danger, he knew not how. This good priest also declared that whenever he was assailed by any temptation, he had only to recommend himself mentally to the holy father, and he was immediately freed from it, and recovered his peace of conscience.

Francesco Maria Tarugi, having an almost irresistible temptation to idleness, disclosed it to the Saint, who was at that time confined to his bed. He prayed for him at once, and with such affectionate earnestness, that he was raised up from his bed about the height of a span; after some time he said to him, "Francesco Maria, how do you feel now?" Francesco replied, "Very well, father; I never felt better." In like manner, when Agostino Boncompagni, a youth of eighteen, was harassed by some temptations, the Saint told him to come to his mass and that he would communicate him. He served the Saint's mass, and communicated, and the temptations left him.

Others say that every time the Saint heard their confessions, or laid his hands upon their heads, or they themselves made use of the remedies he had

taught them, they were sure to have their troubles lightened, and to be comforted in their temptations.

At times, in his playful way, he would give his penitents a gentle slap on the cheek, saying, "It is not you I am beating, but the devil;" and whenever he did this, bad thoughts seemed to fly at his very touch. Indeed some confessed that by merely pronouncing his name they were delivered from temptations.

Many were those also whom he delivered from the troubles which occur in the daily affairs of the world. Giulio Petrucci, a Sienese noble, whom the Saint afterwards placed in the service of St. Charles, was harassed by some great anxiety; and as he had heard of the goodness and sanctity of Philip, he went to confess to him, with a confident hope that he would be delivered from his trouble. Nor was he disappointed, for no sooner had he related his grievance, than he found himself as completely relieved from anxiety as if it had never disquieted him. This occurrence inspired him with such an opinion of Philip, that he put himself entirely under obedience to him, and never withdrew from it so long as the Saint lived; moreover, from that day forth, even in the decrepitude of old age, he never failed to frequent the exercises of the Oratory, to the great edification of all who knew him.

When Sixtus V.<sup>1</sup> succeeded to the pontificate, two apothecaries, Bernardino Cotta and Gherardo Caracci, contended for the office of apothecary to the Pope, and so warm did they become in the contest, that one

<sup>1</sup> Felice Peretti, b. 1521, Franciscan Friar, cr. Cardinal 1568, elected Pope 1585, d. 1590. See *La Vie de Sixte Quint*, par le BARON DE HÜBNER, 3 vols. 8vo, Paris, 1870.



evening they were on the point of murdering each other. Antonia, the sister of Gherardo, immediately went to the holy father and told him the state of things. Philip pretended to pay hardly any attention to what she said, but simply replied: "That will do; go home and do not be afraid." He then said mass, at which she was present; and on her return home she found that her brother had got the office he was seeking, and thus all contest was at an end. Giovan Battista Magnani, a gentleman of Bologna, one of Gregory XIII.'s attendants, had lost many hundred crowns at play, and had become half desperate in consequence. The holy father met him at Corte Savella, and although he did not know him, he took him by the hand, and said with much feeling: "Do not despair; God will help you; do but go to confession, and you shall see the grace of God." He took him to S. Girolamo and heard his confession, and when he laid his hand upon his head, Giovan Battista immediately felt his heart lightened, and all his distress gone. He was filled with such wonder by this incident that he went about everywhere, saying that of a truth Father Philip was a great Saint.

Boezio Giunta, a cleric of Sinigaglia, being also in great trouble, went to S. Girolamo della Carità to confess, and finding the Saint in the confessional, knelt down. No sooner had he made the sign of the cross than Philip, though he had never had any knowledge of him before, lifted up his eyes to heaven and said: "Lord! this is a soul grievously distressed," and these words alone were sufficient to comfort Boezio and to free him from all anxiety. Another cleric, a Roman named Bartolomeo Mantica, corrector of the press to

Cesare Baronius, received intelligence that his father had fallen into the hands of bandits. In great affliction he went to Chiesa Nuova to let the fathers know, in order that they might pray for him, and found the Saint just taking off his vestments after mass. He told him the misfortune which had happened to his father, and the Saint bade him not to be afraid, for that his father would not suffer any injury. The next day Bartolomeo returned to Philip, and told him he had fresh news; that the bandits had demanded a ransom of 1500 crowns, and that if it was not paid within a few days, they would murder his father. When the Saint heard this he was greatly disturbed, and said to himself: "We must console this poor fellow, who cannot pay a hundred, let alone a thousand crowns." Then turning to Mantica, he said: "Get the Capuchins to pray." "Father," replied Bartolomeo, "that is done already." Philip, with a cheerful look, answered: "Well, go on getting prayers; you will be heard, and God will restore him to you without any ransom." The prediction was verified; a few days afterwards he heard that his father had been delivered from the hands of the bandits in a most remarkable manner, without having suffered any injury, or paid a farthing of ransom.

A lady of a princely house was suffering under some trouble which had lasted more than ten years, and by simply reading a letter which Philip wrote to alleviate her distress, she experienced such consolation that she said: "Since I read Father Philip's letter, I have felt so contented with my lot, that I would not change places with any queen in the world." Prudenza Diaz, a Roman lady, had some heavy trials, which caused

her such insupportable vexation and trouble, that she could neither read nor say her usual prayers, and when she went to confession she found no comfort in it. At last, becoming impatient, and a burden to herself, she was sent by Father Angelo Velli, her confessor, to speak to the holy father about this tribulation. When she came to the confessional, before she had spoken a single word, Philip related with accuracy everything she intended to tell him; then, laying his hand upon her head, he said some prayers, and making the sign of the cross on her forehead, sent her away. In an instant all her distress vanished, and she was filled with consolation, and freed from all impatience and disquietude.

The same thing happened to Livia Vestri Orsina, who was harassed by a particular thought for six months together. Father Velli was her confessor also, and, being unable to free her, sent her to the holy father. He heard what she had to say, merely answered, "It is nothing," and immediately all trouble vanished from her mind. There was another instance of the same sort in Camillo Panfilio, father of Innocent X. He had been awake the whole night through, unable to sleep because of some business which pressed upon his mind. The night seemed a thousand years long, so anxious was he to speak to the Saint. In the morning, directly Philip saw him, he said: "O Camillo, I would have you know that I have been with you all this night in order to console you;" at which words all disturbance left him, and the business turned out exactly as he wished.

We will conclude with the words of Cardinal

Girolamo Panfilio,<sup>1</sup> brother of Camillo, about the Saint. "In all my necessities I recommended myself to Philip, and by his prayers and counsel I was freed from all my troubles, so that when he helped me I felt quite secure, and was afraid of nothing." We will only add that he was most urgent in enforcing the duty of thankfulness upon those who were delivered from temptations, or other cares; for he knew how soon men forget the favours they have received from God. Thus he gave an obedience to one of his penitents who had received a most signal favour, to recite the Office of the Cross, and that of the Holy Spirit, every day for the remainder of his life.

<sup>1</sup> Girolamo Panfilio, b. 1544, cr. Cardinal 1604, d. 1610—a special favourite of St. Philip.

## CHAPTER X

### PHILIP DELIVERS MANY FROM MELANCHOLY AND SCRUPLES — HIS SINGULAR POWER OF GIVING CONSOLATION

PHILIP had a most singular gift of dispelling low spirits and scruples, both of which are so difficult to cure. A Roman noble was living in retirement in the convent of S. Gregorio, because of a quarrel. One day, a body was brought to be buried in the church, and among those that followed the corpse was a possessed person. When the funeral was over, the gentleman began asking this person questions out of curiosity, when after some conversation he went close to him with extraordinary and terrific gestures, and said: "You are possessed too." At these words a wild fear and melancholy took possession of the noble; he became afraid that he was really possessed, and went so far as to have himself exorcised; and this strange idea took such hold of him, that when the exorcist asked him his name, he gave different names of devils, just as his fancy prompted him; besides giving many other signs of actual possession: so that the priest, who more than once exorcised him, decided that the possession was real. The exorcisms seemed however only to increase the evil; and his melancholy grew to such a pitch, that he was put into the hands of four of the principal medical men in Rome. They tried many remedies,

especially with a view to restore his sleep, the want of which, together with other things, had reduced him at last to skin and bone ; but nothing was of the least avail. At length, giving up physicians, he went one day to Torre di Specchi, to visit an aunt of his, who was in that monastery, and told her the whole history of his malady. The nuns persuaded him to see the holy father ; but as he was a young man of the world, he did not dare to go to Philip ; so his aunt and one of the other nuns begged the Saint to go to his house and see him. Philip went to him, assured him straightforwardly that he was not possessed, and to turn him from his fancy made him sing a little with Father Antonio Gallonio, and then told him to come and see him at the Chiesa Nuova, which he did. The Saint in his usual affectionate way took hold of his head and pressed it to his bosom, saying, "How do you feel?" Feeling immediate relief, he answered : "Father, I am cured." Philip then got him to make a general confession ; and the gentleman, finding himself cheerful and happy so long as he was with Philip, began to go to him every day and stay whole hours in his company. Thus by degrees, without either medicines or exorcisms, he not only recovered his former health, but at the same time became a very devout man, and continued to frequent the exercises of the Oratory with much fervour.

Another circumstance of his recovery deserves to be mentioned. While making his general confession, he said that he could not get rid of the impression that he was possessed. The Saint answered : "Do not be afraid ; I will exorcise you in the night." One night the penitent dreamed that his mouth was wide open,

and that a great number of devils went out of him ; he immediately awoke, calling upon the holy Name of Jesus, and from that moment was entirely free from his distress. The next day he related the circumstance to Philip, who put his hand on his head, gave him a gentle box on the ear, and said : “ *Vade, et noli amplius peccare.*”

Domenico Saraceni, an eminent physician of that day, fell into a terrible melancholy, for which he could neither find any remedy himself, nor obtain any relief from the prescriptions of other medical men. He conceived however a lively faith that he would obtain his cure through the merits of Philip, and went to see him. Philip received him with great charity, and said, “Do not be afraid ; you will be cured without any doubt.” At these words Domenico felt a sudden lightening of his affliction, and without any further remedy got rid of his melancholy altogether. He afterwards made a formal declaration on oath that he believed his cure to be miraculous. Almost the same thing happened to an influential person about the court, who had fallen into a profound melancholy ; Philip relieved him by simply saying, “Do not despair.” He also cured Father Francesco Bernardi, of the Congregation, of a terrible depression, and restored his former cheerfulness, by simply inviting him to run with him.

As to scruples, it would be impossible to enumerate all those whom he freed from them, or the methods he used for the purpose. The following cases will suffice for the consolation of those who are harassed by scruples, and to encourage them to recommend themselves to Philip in their distress. Giuliano

Fuscherio, a priest of S. Girolamo della Carità, and a man of most exemplary life, had a penitent who had been brought to such a pass by scruples, that he could not go to confession. Giuliano had sent him to several priests, to see if they could relieve him in some way or other; but as no good came of it, he resolved at last to send him to the holy father. As soon as Philip saw the penitent, he said to him, "My son, you are suffering under a temptation of the devil; I know you very well; but only have a good will, and all will come right in the end." He then embraced him with much affection; and as he saw that the whole proceeded from the spirit of pride, through which the devil had obtained a hold upon his heart, the Saint, in order to confound the enemy, and at the same time to humble the penitent, and thus to free him from his scruples, said to him in the presence of Father Fuscherio, "Will you mention your sins out loud to us two together?" The penitent replied, "Yes, father, most willingly, for I do not hold back either through fear or human respect, but simply from an inability to express myself." Then Philip said, "Kneel down between us two, and begin at once to mention your sins." When he had finished, Philip added, "Now kiss the ground for the confusion of the devil;" and no sooner had he kissed the ground than all his scruples melted away in a moment, leaving him in perfect freedom, and able to go to confession ever afterwards without the slightest difficulty.

A very common remedy which the Saint made use of to cure his own subjects of scruples, was to make them kneel down in the refectory of the Congregation at meal times, and accuse themselves of their scruples.



Cardinal Frederick Borromeo mentions the case of an ecclesiastic who was painfully scrupulous in saying office, and got worse every day. At last, almost in despair, he went to Philip, who merely promising to pray for him, shut the door in his face and sent him away. He returned home, set himself to say his office, said it, to his own great astonishment, without the slightest hindrance, and was never troubled with scruples again.

Philip used to give various remedies and instructions on this subject. What he most insisted upon was, that when a scrupulous person had once made up his mind that he had not consented to a temptation, he was not to examine himself again as to whether he had done so or not; because such reflections frequently bring the temptations back again. Many are harassed with scruples because they are uncertain whether or not they have consented to a suggestion; Philip laid down two rules for any one thus troubled; the first is to consider whether in the temptation he has always preserved a love of the virtue against which he was tempted; for in that case he may sufficiently conjecture that he has not consented. The second rule is to reflect whether he is ready to make oath that he has consented to the temptation, knowing it to be a mortal sin to swear to anything as certain which is doubtful; and if he could not swear that he has consented, he may consider that he has not done so in reality. Besides the ordinary remedy of submitting always and in everything to the judgment of their confessor, he specially exhorted his penitents to despise their scruples.

He would not allow frequent confession to the scrupulous, in order that they might accustom themselves not to reflect on their scruples or pay attention to them; and for the same reason if they began to speak of their scruples while they were confessing, he would send them off to communion without hearing another word. He frequently said of scruples, that they are a disease which often makes truce with a man, but hardly ever peace, and that nothing but humility ever comes off victorious over them.

Philip had so special a gift of consoling the afflicted that not only his words and the different manners and gestures he assumed, but everything belonging to him imparted consolation. His hands, in which he always held something, either a spiritual book, or a rosary, refreshed and comforted those whom he touched. Tiberio Ricciardelli declares that when the Saint pulled his hair, he felt his heart gladdened, and if he was under any temptation at the time, it immediately disappeared. Cardinal Baronius was always filled with joy when Philip gave him a playful box on the ear. Cardinal Ottavio Bandini<sup>1</sup> used to boast that the Saint had once boxed his ears when he was a boy. Francesco Pucci of Palestrina says that whenever the holy father touched his head, he felt such abundant consolation, that his heart bounded for joy; and the young men who used to go to confession to him all said the same; so that those words of the Canticles were verified in him, "His hands are turned, and as of gold, full of hyacinths."

Pellegrino Altobello, Canon of S. Marco in Rome,

<sup>1</sup> Ottavio Bandini, b. 1558, Bishop of Fermo 1595, cr. Cardinal 1596, d. 1629.

speaking of these words, said, "When I conversed with Philip I had such a feeling of inward satisfaction that I would fain never have left him. Every time he met me in the street he pressed my face between his hands, and said, 'How are you, and what are you doing?' and while he did so, I used to feel a particular consolation, and it seemed as if his flesh gave forth a most sweet fragrance: One day he met me at the palace of Cardinal Sforza, and as soon as he came up to me he began caressing me in his usual manner with his hands upon my face, saying, 'Well, what is San Pellegrino about now?' and his words left such cheerfulness in my heart, such joy and happiness, that for very lightheartedness I did not know where I was going."

Indeed, not only the Saint himself, but his very room had such an effect upon people, that those who were about him resorted to it as their ordinary remedy in their troubles. Marzio Altieri was so inundated with joy whilst he stayed in it, that he used to say, "Philip's room is not a room, but an earthly Paradise." Giulio Benigno, Archbishop of Thessalonica, said the same, and was in the habit of going there very often. Cardinal Frederick Borromeo took such pleasure in it, that even when he had nothing to speak to the Saint about, he esteemed it a great privilege simply to remain in his room. Alessandro, Cardinal of Florence, afterwards Leo XI., went there several times every week, often remaining five or six hours at a time; and he frequently said to his attendants, that he could not bear to hear the Ave ring, because the day seemed to have gone too quickly. Nay many, by only standing at the door of his room without going in, felt their



ST. PHILIP'S ROOM, CHIESA NUOVA.  
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SOURCE OF JOY TO ALL

troubles lightened Fabrizio de' Massari when he was in any distress of mind, used to go to the door of Philip's room, and was at once relieved without any further remedy. Indeed this became so completely a custom with him, that one day, when Cardinal Crescenzi found him there, and asked him why he did not ever find him there, and asked him why he did not ever at Philip's door was quite enough to procure for him entire relief and consolation. Nero del Nero, when ever he was in trouble, even after the Saint's death, used to go to the room which had been his, and how ever heavy his heart might be, it was lightened immediately. There were some who recovered their lost peace of mind by simply looking at Philip's countenance. Thus Monte Zazzara declares that when he was in trouble the mere presence of Philip comforted him, even though he did not say a single word to him; and Ridolfo Silvestri, physician to Gregory XIV says that he never felt so joyous as when he was with Philip. To dream of Philip was enough to give strength and comfort to many; in a word, he was a perpetual source of comfort and refreshment to all who in any way had recourse to him in the hour of their distress.



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## CHAPTER XI

### OF PHILIP'S ALMS

ALTHOUGH Philip's charity was chiefly intent on succouring others in their spiritual wants, he did not confine himself to this, but endeavoured also by all the means in his power to alleviate the temporal distresses of his neighbour. When he visited sick people who were poor, he generally took them alms, not only of money, but of everything else which they might need in their sickness. He did not wait to be sent for, but made it his business to find out the abodes of the poor, and often carried, under his cloak or in his pockets, comforts for those whom he visited. He might be seen going about at all hours, and in all weathers, when there was any work of charity to be done. He very often carried petitions to the Pope, and put himself to trouble in other ways for poor persons with whom he was hardly at all acquainted.

So ardent was his charitable zeal, that God often rewarded him by showing him in spirit the necessities of others. Thus, a certain musician of Castel S. Angelo having fallen into poverty, the holy father succoured him every time that he was in want, without being informed of it either by the poor man himself, or by others on his behalf. He did the same to Antonio Fantini, who has been already mentioned. On one occasion Antonio went as usual to confession

at a time when he happened to be in extreme necessity, and Philip gave him sixteen crowns without his mentioning a word about his distress. In like manner he provided food and clothing during a long time for a decayed nobleman in great poverty, of whose distress he had no natural sources of information. Neither were Philip's alms trifling. He used to give in large quantities, both money and other things; and when a lady of rank had given him furniture for his room, he immediately had it sold, and gave away the price of it for the love of God. He relieved the necessities not only of single individuals, but often of whole families. On one occasion he found a mother, with four little children and the grandmother, so poor, that they had no means of providing either food or clothing. For the space of four years Philip took care of them, provided them each day with the means of living, and sometimes gave them in addition as much as eighteen and twenty crowns at a time, to aid them in other necessities.

The wife of Vincenzo Miniatore, of whom we shall have to speak later, a most excellent woman, was left a widow with six children. Philip provided her with food and clothing, and gave one of the daughters the means of becoming a nun. When Gabriella of Cortona, a pious and highly respected lady, lost her husband, Philip supplied everything needful for her family, and settled one of her daughters in marriage. He himself, ever on the look-out to gain souls, or to aid others to gain them, went to the wedding, and took with him Baronius, Francesco Maria Tarugi, and Giovanni Francesco Bordino, and while they were at table ordered Baronius to sing the Miserere as a substitute for spiritual reading.

But although Philip was full of charity towards all, he showed greater generosity towards poor girls than towards any one else. Some nieces of Giovanni Annuccia were left without any resources, whereupon he gave them an alms of six hundred crowns, besides supplying their daily needs until they were settled. He found two Florentine girls, who were left in Rome without father or mother, in great peril of their honour. He provided for them so long as they remained there, and then found an opportunity of sending them to Florence, where, by his assistance, they became nuns. Another time he gave eighty crowns to a girl, to enable her to enter a convent; and three other orphans in extreme distress he provided with marriage portions, giving the husband of one of them a hundred crowns over and above the dowry, to put him in the way of making a living.

In the year 1586, a poor woman who was burdened with six children, four sons and two daughters, in conjunction with two others as poor as herself, and all three penitents of the Saint, moved, as they thought, by the spirit of charity, formed the design of gathering together poor abandoned orphan girls, and in less than two years had got together about twenty. All this was done without their taking Philip's advice, or having any means of supporting their orphans, as they themselves were straitened by poverty. Philip therefore sent for them, and first of all mortified and humbled them most severely, commanding them not to enter a church for some days. He then took upon himself the care of the poor girls, and by degrees distributed them in different places, some in convents, others with ladies who offered to take charge of them, and the rest

in other safe homes, so that in a short time he contrived to place them all in security.

He was also particularly charitable to prisoners, and sent large sums of money and other things to all the prisons in Rome. He visited the prisoners himself twice a week, and often sent his penitents to visit them and to help them in their trials. He set no bounds to his tenderness towards the bashful poor, and was most liberal in his alms to them, which he would send at times by the hands of others, with an injunction not to say from whom they came. To some religious houses he gave a monthly allowance, besides the daily alms which he sent them; and kept hung up behind his door a list of pious institutions, to which he often sent help. Poor students were another object of his special charity, particularly if he saw that they had good talents and lived in the fear of God. He provided them not only with food and clothing, but also with books for their studies. Among those whom he assisted were two who, for lack of money, were about to abandon their studies; by his kindness they were enabled to persevere, and both afterwards rose to be Cardinals. To one of these he often gave as much as thirty crowns at a time, and to aid the other he sold all the books he possessed himself.

Father Antonio Gallonio declares that Philip gave alms to all the poor that ever came to him, and that he never sent one away without comfort; and that when he walked about Rome he would always make some of the party take money with them, to give to the beggars he might meet; indeed many were of opinion that he was miraculously supplied with

money, seeing that he gave so largely and for so long a time.

God set the seal of His approval on his almsgiving by various miracles. In the year 1550, as he was carrying some bread in the dead of night to one who was ashamed to beg, and who was advanced in years and of a noble family, Philip, in endeavouring to get out of the way of a carriage that was coming along the road with great rapidity, fell into a very deep hole, but an angel upheld him by the hair, and brought him forth without any injury. On another occasion, about the same time, while Philip was employed in these pious works, an angel presented himself to him in the form of a beggar, and asked an alms of him. The Saint immediately gave him the few pieces of money he had about him. But the angel, seeing his promptitude, refused them, saying, "I wished to see what you would do," and immediately disappeared. From that moment Philip understood still more clearly the excellence and the virtue of almsgiving, and his tenderness of heart towards the poor was greater than ever; whilst the remembrance of this favour was a spur to his perseverance in his deeds of charity, and in the generous liberality of his almsgiving, which we have described.

In a word, his charity was so great that his penitents generally called him Father both of soul and body; and after his death many wept at the mere remembrance of his alms, whilst others cried out, "Never will another man come into the world so charitable as Philip!" It was for this reason that Cardinal Bellarmine,<sup>1</sup> a

<sup>1</sup> Roberto Bellarmino, b. 1542, nephew of Pope Marcellus II., entered the Society of Jesus, cr. Cardinal 1598, Archbishop of Capua, d. 1621.

man as famous for sanctity as for learning, to whom the Sacred Congregation of Rites committed the cause of Philip's canonization, called him a second St. John the Almoner, because of the numerous alms recorded of him in the processes. When S. Francesca Romana was canonized in the year 1608, a poor woman named Maria della Volta, who had often received large alms from Philip, went into St. Peter's, and calling him to mind, burst into tears and cried out, "And when will my Father Philip be canonized? For if Santa Francesca carried wood upon her head to give it in alms to the poor, my Father Philip has countless times come to my house loaded with bread concealed under his cloak, and supplied my parents with wine and oil, and money, and help of every kind!"

The Saint had instructed this poor woman with great patience and charity in mental prayer, telling her to consider when she recited the "Our Father," that she had God for her Father in heaven, and so on with the rest, teaching her to meditate on it word by word. He afterwards gave her a rosary-book, to enable her to learn how to meditate on the Passion.

Philip's charity towards the poor was united with a spirit of generosity towards all, and of intense gratitude for any kindness that was done to him. Cardinal Girolamo Panfilio said of him: "The holy father was most grateful to all who did him any service, however insignificant, generally recompensing them, even in temporal matters, far beyond the value of what he received; and he kept most tenaciously in remembrance the least kindness which was shown him." The Abate Marco Antonio Maffa gave the same testimony.

“ Philip,” he says, “ was so grateful and courteous, that no one could make him a present without receiving another from him of double its value ; and I remember that once, when I had begged him to accept some little trifle as a mark of my affection for him, he presently sent me a bronze crucifix of beautiful workmanship, which must have cost several crowns, and which I keep now as a most precious relic of that holy man.”

Yet, for all Philip's charity towards the poor, he could not bear to see them going about the church asking for alms, and he would even get up from the confessional himself to send them to the door ; not through any want of compassion, but to prevent the divine offices being disturbed. He acted in the same way with children when they cried out, and with workmen or others, who made any noise that was not absolutely necessary ; and if he heard anything of this sort when he was at the altar, he made a sign to have it stopped.

## CHAPTER XII

### OF HIS COMPASSION AND TENDERNESS OF HEART

PHILIP'S compassion and tender-heartedness were so great, that he could not bear to see any one suffering; and although he abhorred riches, yet he would have wished always to have enough to give to the poor, and to succour them in their distress. Hearing once of a poor woman who was unable to leave her house for want of clothes, he instantly took off his cassock and sent it to her. He could not bear to see young girls or boys ill-clad, but did all in his power to procure fresh clothes for them. Whenever he knew that any one was suffering undeservedly, he was so deeply moved that he felt, as it were, constrained to exert all his influence in his behalf. Tiberio Astalli, a Roman gentleman, was falsely accused of murder, and Philip, knowing his innocence, interceded so efficaciously for him with the Pope, that he obtained his liberation. He did the same on behalf of a priest attached to the church of St. Benedict, who was falsely denounced to his superiors for a grave offence; and notwithstanding the power of his adversaries, Philip took up his defence with such zeal, that he succeeded in clearing him, and in establishing his innocence before the world. Another time he heard of some gipsies who were unjustly imprisoned and condemned to the galleys, and pleaded so successfully with St. Pius V., who was then Pope, that



he procured their freedom ; and in the time of Sixtus V., he obtained the release of a Roman gentleman, a great number of whose vassals had come from different villages on his estate to bring false accusations against him.

The same spirit of compassion constantly impelled him to acts of kindness towards all. In the year 1551, during a severe famine, six loaves were sent to him as a present ; but knowing that there was a poor priest, a foreigner, at S. Girolamo, who was suffering from hunger, Philip sent the six loaves to him, and had nothing to eat himself all that day except a few olives. One of his penitents finding this out, asked why he had done so, and had not rather reserved at least half the bread for himself ? Philip answered that he was well enough known in Rome, and somebody was sure to help him, but that the poor foreigner would not so readily have found help in his necessity.

He had a special tenderness towards artisans, and in particular towards those who, after working hard for their bread, found difficulty in selling their goods. His charity was ingenious in finding means of helping them. There were two brothers, Frenchmen, who were good workmen in their trade, which was that of watchmakers, but who had grown old and were burdened with families of grown-up daughters. The Saint, in order to assist them, gave them an order for a great number of watches of different kinds, which he afterwards begged rich persons to buy, thus helping the needy by getting money from those who would not so easily have parted with it in mere alms. One of his penitents saw Philip upon one occasion persuading a man of rank to buy several of these watches, and was scandalised by

it, as though the holy father were persuading him to throw away his money in an idle and foolish manner; but when he afterwards discovered the Saint's artifice, he was greatly edified by it.

One evening a poor chicory-seller went to the exercises of the Oratory at S. Girolamo, and such a violent rain came on that he could not get away to sell his chicory. This incident at once stirred Philip's compassion; he bought part of the chicory himself, and begged others to buy the rest, sending the poor fellow home in high spirits. We have already spoken of his tenderness to the sick, and especially to those in the hospitals, and we shall have occasion to speak of it again. He also felt a particular interest in the poor orphans of the Piazza Capranica, and several times a week sent some of his penitents of tried virtue to serve them, make their beds, wash them, and perform other works of mercy for them. We must not omit an incident connected with this work. One of those whom he used to send on this errand of mercy, was a lady named Fiora Ragni, who, although very pious, felt a strong repugnance to it on account of some disgusting insects which she met with in its performance. She made known her difficulty to the Saint, who told her not to give up the good work, and what is more, ordered her to put into her mouth the first of these insects she came across. The good lady bowed her head to the command, but do what she would, she never from that moment succeeded in finding one. Much astonished, she went back and told the holy Father, who with his usual smile sent her away.

The tenderness of the Saint's heart was not confined to the human race, but flowed over even upon animals,

in whom he loved to contemplate the Creator. A father of the Congregation, passing one day through a court-yard, and seeing a lizard, put his foot upon it; whereupon Philip said to him: "Cruel fellow! what has that poor little animal done to you?" Another time, passing near a butcher's shop, he saw a butcher wound a dog with one of his knives, and notwithstanding the Saint's usual equanimity, he was greatly troubled at the sight, and had some difficulty in calming himself. One of his penitents once found a little bird and took it to him; as soon as he saw it he was moved with pity, and said, "Do not hurt it; open the window and let it go." The youth obeyed, but a little while after the Saint called him back again, and asked him what he had done with the bird; he answered that he had let it go in obedience to his order. Philip replied, "It would have been better to have kept it and brought it up, for it is so young that it will not know where to go, and perhaps will die of hunger."

He could not bear to see the slightest cruelty shown to animals under any pretext. If a bird, or any other creature, happened to get into a room, he would have the window or door opened immediately that it might escape; and if any one caught an animal alive he begged of them to let it go forthwith, or if it was mischievous to set it free where it could injure no one. When he was in a carriage he always warned the coachman not only not to run over any one, but to be careful not even to hurt an animal, and if live animals were given him, he would not have them killed, but sent them to some of his penitents, telling them either to take care of them themselves, or to give them away to some one else; his tenderness of heart thus continually

appearing in innumerable little ways. It seemed too as though the animals themselves corresponded by their mute gratitude to this loving gentleness; for even such as were not domesticated allowed him to touch them and caress them as though they were tame. One of his penitents, a Frenchman, named Louis Ames, had two little birds, which sang most charmingly, and he made the Saint a present of them. Philip accepted them on condition that Louis would come himself every day to look after them, a condition which the good father made in order the more completely to win his soul. Louis agreed, and one day when he came, he found the cage door open, and one of the little birds perched on the face of the holy father who was lying in bed unwell, and then fluttering and playing round him, singing all the while most sweetly. The Saint seeing Louis asked if he had accustomed the bird to do this; Louis said he had not. Philip then drove the little creature away several times, but it always returned, fluttering from his feet to his face, and from his face to his feet, and nothing could allure it from him. The Saint, seeing this, said to Louis, "Take the cage, and offer it to the bird;" the moment he did so, it went in quietly, as if it was conscious it had received an obedience to do so.

## CHAPTER XIII

### OF PHILIP'S VIRGINAL PURITY

WE have thus far shown Philip's wondrous love of God and of his neighbour, and the tenderness and compassion of his heart. Amongst all his other virtues, it seems most natural to speak first of his virginal purity, as that which is most rarely met with in its perfection, and which, more than any other, renders its possessor singular and wonderful in the eyes of men. Philip, well knowing the pleasure which God takes in cleanness of heart, had no sooner come to years of discretion and learned to distinguish between good and evil, than he set himself to wage war with all his might against the concupiscence of the flesh, and never rested until he had gained the victory over it. Thus it was that although the religious exercises mentioned in the last book brought him into contact with all kinds of persons, and exposed him to many occasions of falling, he preserved his purity spotless to the last.

In proof of this fact, Cardinal Baronius, his confessor, bears witness that a few days before he died, Philip acknowledged it to him, amid floods of tears and lamentations over his own ingratitude to God. Persiano Rosa, who was the Saint's confessor in earlier years, said the same; and indeed it was the common belief, in Rome as well as in Florence, amongst all who knew

him; and the Sacred Congregation of Rites, in his beatification, as well as in his canonisation, declared it adequately proved. In confirmation of its truth we will only add that he himself, towards the close of his life, revealed the fact to one of his penitents when hearing his confession, for the purpose of encouraging him to live a chaste life, by showing him from his own experience that a man may not only live chastely, but even, by the grace of God, preserve his virginity from every stain.

From his boyhood to the very time of his death, Philip watched over this precious treasure with the greatest diligence. He was not content with keeping it jealously hidden beneath the ashes of humility, and standing guard over his own heart with unceasing strictness; but he took also the most exact care of all his outward senses, and of every part of his body. Like St. Antony, he never allowed any part of his body to be seen uncovered; and we may mention that he was particularly pleased when he noticed that others observed the same caution. From his lips no word was ever heard that could offend the most sensitive modesty. So strict was his custody of his eyes, that one of the most beautiful women in Rome, who went to confession to him for thirty years successively, declared that she could never perceive that he had once looked at her during all that time. From the same motive, when he first began to hear confessions, he was not very willing to hear women; indeed, to the last, he had always far more men than women amongst his penitents. He never allowed women to speak to him at the confessional except through the grate; and in opposition to the usual sweetness of his character,

he was by no means affable with them, but rather rough and abrupt, keeping his face turned the other way whilst he spoke to them. In his old age, however, he was not so austere with them, because he said the Lord had given him the grace to hear their confessions as he wished. One of his penitents once took him to dine at a gentleman's house, and after dinner the Saint turned to his penitent and said, "You have made me do a thing which I never did before,—eat in company with women!"

The devil, however, often endeavoured, not only by suggesting to him in his earlier years evil thoughts, which by his prayers and tears he always promptly overcame, but by various other artifices, to stain the whiteness of his purity. One day, whilst he was yet a layman, he was accosted when on a journey by some profligates, who, probably allured by his good looks, tempted him to commit sin. The holy youth's first and most anxious wish was to fly, but seeing that impossible, he began to speak to them of the hideousness of sin, and of the things of God, so winningly and efficaciously, that he not only made them lay aside their horrible thought, but even succeeded in reclaiming them from their evil ways, and bringing them to repentance. Another time, also whilst he was a layman, he was obliged to lodge one night at the house of a friend, where there was a beautiful but immoral woman, who entered his room secretly during the night, and tempted him to sin. But the Saint, armed with divine grace, so far from yielding to the perilous assault, [drove away from him that instrument of hell, and came off victorious from the fearful contest.

About the same time, some persons who did not believe that Philip was really what men commonly took him for, invited him under some pretext to their house, and then put two persons of evil life into his room, and locked the door upon them. Philip, finding himself in this strait without any possibility of escape, immediately began to pray with such fervour, that neither of the two unhappy women durst speak to him, much less approach him; and at last they were obliged in shame and confusion to leave him.

After he was a priest and confessor, a woman of bad character named Cesarea, having heard the report of Philip's purity, trusting to the allurements of her beauty, audaciously boasted that she would cause him to fall. In pursuance of this horrible design she feigned herself ill, and sent for him, saying she wished to go to confession, and to change her life, so that she might not die in sin. Philip, in order not to imperil his favourite virtue of chastity, was always unwilling, especially at that time of his life, to engage in the conversion of such persons; but as the one desire of his heart was the salvation of souls, he allowed himself, though with difficulty, to be over-persuaded, and to go to visit her. The wicked woman, however, was quickly undeceived in her expectations; for the instant he perceived her diabolical intention, he signed himself with the cross, and turning his back upon her, ran down the staircase with the utmost speed. When the unhappy woman saw that she was foiled, in her rage she took up a stool, and flung it after him; but God preserved him at once from peril of the body and from that of the soul.

His fidelity on this occasion was so pleasing to the



Divine Majesty, that henceforth he received the grace to be free from all temptations of the flesh, and Baronius relates that the Saint himself told him, that in this matter he had become as insensible as a log of wood. Antonio Gallonio, speaking of Philip's purity and modesty, says, "My intercourse with the holy father has convinced me that his purity was not inferior to that which, by special favour of God, was conferred on Eleazar, Count of Ariano, and Simone Salo, the praise of whose virtue Surius has borrowed from Metaphrastes, both of whom led a life angelic rather than human, in the midst of the world and of constant intercourse with men."

The effects of this wondrous grace of purity were as striking and singular in Philip as the gift itself. The lustre of his innocence shone forth even in his countenance, and particularly in his eyes, which even in the very last years of his life were as clear and bright as those of a boy, so that no painter was ever able to give the expression of them, though many took the greatest pains to do so. It was not easy to keep one's gaze steadily fixed upon his face, as there came a sort of light from his eyes which shot into the eyes of those who looked at him; so that some have said that his very look was that of an angel of Paradise. His hands were so white and transparent that when seen against the light they looked like alabaster. His body emitted an indescribable fragrance, which even in his decrepit old age, refreshed all those who came near him; and many declared that they felt piety and devotion infused into them, simply by the smell of his hands or his breast.

Fabrizio Aragona, a gentleman of Mantua, went to

confess to him, and finding him ill in bed, expected from the Saint's great age that there would be some unpleasant odour about him, in consequence of which he tried to keep at some little distance from him. At length, however, he did draw near to the bed, when Philip took him by the hand and pressed him strongly to his bosom, and at the same moment Fabrizio was sensible of so sweet a fragrance, that he was astonished, and did not know what to liken it to. But afterwards hearing the holy father's virginal purity spoken of, he said to himself, "This no doubt was the cause from which the fragrance proceeded." Giovan Battista Lambertini, Beneficiary of St. Peter's, whilst he was confessing to the Saint, leaned upon his breast to receive absolution, and in doing so also perceived a fragrance which greatly astonished him.

God had endowed the Saint with the power of detecting the vice of impurity by the smell: so that sometimes when he passed in the streets a woman of bad character, who was quite unknown to him, he would put his hand or his handkerchief to his nose, with all the gestures of one sensible of an offensive smell; and he used to say that the stench of this vice was so horrible, that nothing in the world could equal it. Sometimes, when any of his penitents went to him stained with this vice, he would say to them before they had time to speak, "O my son! how foul is this stench!" or, "My son! I know your sins already by their ill odour." Hence, some who fell into this sin, aware of his gift, were reluctant to go into his presence, lest he should detect them; indeed he often did so by their very looks.

Many confessed that they were at once delivered

from temptations of impurity by his merely laying his hands on their heads; and others, by simply conversing with him, felt themselves inspired with the love of purity, and by keeping up their intimacy with him succeeded in persevering in it. He imparted the grace of chastity to a great number by simply pressing them to his bosom; and what is still more remarkable, not his hands only, but inanimate things which he had touched or used were gifted with the power of removing temptations. Antonio Fucci, a physician of Città di Castello, and one of the Saint's first disciples, was harassed with temptations in attending women, and in consequence had actually determined at all costs to give up his practice. As he had, however, no other means of support, he consulted the holy father about his resolution. Philip pitied him exceedingly, and gave him one of his garters, telling him to go on following his profession, and that provided he kept as careful a custody over his senses as circumstances would allow, he should never be troubled by the temptation again. Antonio observed the condition, and always carried Philip's gift about with him, and followed his profession fearlessly, without the temptation ever harassing him again.

The very name of Philip seemed to have power to repress the violence of the evil one. A young woman of fourteen, who was left a widow, was grievously tormented with temptations of the flesh; she laid open her trial in confession, but finding no relief, she was sent by F. Angelo Velli, her confessor, to the holy father, who said to her, "When you feel temptations of this sort say to the devil, 'I will accuse you to that dull ass of a Philip.'" The woman obeyed this strange

injunction, and the moment she said the words, she was freed from the temptations; nay, she tried the same remedy in temptations of other kinds, and found herself set free from them also, directly she said the words. He told several others to act in the same way, and with the same result; but he bade them pronounce the words simply, and without any reasoning about them; for he knew how much the devil fears words said with faith and Christian simplicity. Indeed, so terrible was Philip's purity to the evil one, that even after the Saint's death, when the possessed were adjured *propter honestatem Beati Philippi*, they fell into the wildest contortions, a fact which was observed several times by Father Onofrio Bagnasco, a Piedmontese, of the order of the most Holy Trinity for the Redemption of Captives.

Philip, who aimed not only at practising purity himself, but also at assisting others to acquire and preserve it, used to inculcate several maxims on the subject, some of which were suitable for all men, whilst others were meant for particular classes of people and conditions of life. First of all, he used to tell confessors that they ought not to confess women except with the grate between them, that they should not look at them or hold long conversations with them, and that their words should be rather rough and abrupt than otherwise.

He advised them also not to be too ready in going to private houses, unless with a companion, and in cases of necessity, or when special fruit might be expected, and then to be as quick as they could about it; for that having many times done so without any temptations, was no ground for trusting themselves.

Indeed, the devil often lulls his prey into security in order to make him fall, and uses for this purpose the weaker vessel, that is, women. One morning, there came to our church a priest named Prospero Somai, who was unknown to Philip, as Philip was to him; but the Saint saw in spirit this failing in him, and taking him aside, admonished him that it was not well, especially for a priest, to be so intimate with women, and that he must be more cautious for the future. The priest was beyond measure astonished at Philip's acquaintance with the fact, since, as we have said, he was a perfect stranger to him. But the Saint was so convinced of the importance of the matter, that he judged it better not to conceal his knowledge, although it was clear that it came to him by divine revelation, than to omit the warning in a case so full of danger; and the priest corrected his fault.

He exhorted priests never to trust themselves, either on the ground of experience, or length of time, or old age, or illness, but always to fly every occasion, so long, to use his own expression, as they had the power of raising their eyelids. He bade them also take no example from him in this respect, as God had given him gifts which He does not ordinarily grant to all. Father Giovenale Ancina, when at Naples, was appointed to hear confessions; whereupon he wrote to Philip, to ask counsel with regard to the circumspection which that sacred ministry requires, especially in hearing the confessions of women. The Saint sent him the following answer: "Do not be scrupulous about what happens to you, be sure that like things happen to others; only take care not to be more willing to hear one class of sins than another; do not be

curious to know more than is just enough to enable you to apply the remedy, and never go into any other details than those which you must absolutely know, in order to understand the quality or species of the sin : for the rest, recommend yourself to God, who never fails to give more than ordinary help in works of this kind, provided we engage in them with love and caution."

He strongly recommended priests to confess young men at the grate, on the ground that youths are most keenly alive to shame, and might be tempted if they made their confessions more openly, to omit some sin out of shamefacedness. He used to give young men five short rules for keeping themselves pure : the first was to shun bad company ; the second, not to pamper their bodies ; the third was to avoid idleness ; the fourth, to be diligent in prayer ; the fifth, to frequent the sacraments, and especially confession ; and one day he showed Marcello Ferro the disciplines which he used, and told him that to obtain chastity it is necessary to mortify the flesh.

His general advice to every one was, that humility is the true guard of chastity ; and therefore, that when we hear of any one having fallen, we should be moved to pity and not to disdain, and that a want of compassion in such cases is a forerunner of a speedy fall in ourselves ; and he used to add that in the matter of purity there is no danger so great as being without fear of danger.

Among the Saint's penitents was a young man who in his past life had had an intimacy with a wicked woman ; some time after his conversion, thinking he had now gained sufficient stability in virtue, the desire

came into his mind to convert her also; but instead of converting her he was perverted himself, and relapsed into sin. He did not dare to go to the Oratory with his conscience thus stained, and feeling ashamed to appear before Philip, he went to confession elsewhere. At last he came back to him, and the Saint immediately said, "There are some who, because they have gained a little spirituality, think they can do anything, and convert the world, and then they fall, and because they are ashamed to come to their own confessor, go and confess somewhere else." When the young man heard this he turned pale, but the Saint, laying his hands on his head, caressed him very affectionately, as he had been accustomed to do, and said to him, "Are not you he who has been falling into sin, and then going to Aracœli to confess?" and with these few words he persuaded him to return and frequent the Oratory as before.

He declared, moreover, that the best means for the preservation of chastity, is to lay bare our every thought with perfect openness to our confessor, and to keep nothing hidden in our own breasts; and that wounds of this kind are healed as soon as ever they are shown to the physician of our soul. He used to add at the same time, that in order to gain and to preserve this virtue, it is important to have a good and experienced confessor.

He said that as soon as a man felt the presence of temptation, he was to fly to God, uttering devoutly that ejaculation so much esteemed by the holy fathers of the desert, "*Deus, in adjutorium meum intende: Domine, ad adjuvandum me festina,*" or the verse, "*Cor mundum crea in me, Deus, et spiritum rectum innova in*

*visceribus meis,*" and then to kiss the ground; and after this to avoid idleness as much as possible. He earnestly desired those who were assailed by evil suggestions, to turn their thoughts away from them, at least by fixing their minds on indifferent things.

As a remedy against temptations at night, he recommended his penitents to say the *Te lucis ante terminum* every evening before they went to bed, adding that he himself always did so. But what he laid the greatest stress upon, was the doctrine which all the Saints have unanimously taught, that whilst other temptations are overcome by boldly facing them and fighting with them, those against purity are to be overcome by flight. Hence he used to say: "In the warfare of the flesh cowards come off best."



## CHAPTER XIV

### OF PHILIP'S ABSTINENCE

PHILIP justly regarded mortification of the flesh as one of the chief helps towards the maintenance of chastity. Besides the austerities which he practised in his youth, and which are related in the first book, he was accustomed, when he was a priest, to take nothing in the morning, or at most a little bread and wine mingled with a good deal of water, and this he generally took pacing up and down. In the evening, he usually contented himself with a salad, or an egg, or at most a couple of eggs; and he commonly had no bread brought him, but ate the remainder of what had been brought for his breakfast; to this he sometimes added a little fruit according to the season; but for the most part he restricted himself to one of the things we have mentioned, so that Baronius said in a sermon, that the Saint made every day a fast day. He never took milk, or butter, or food dressed with them; he never tasted broth, seldom fish, and still more seldom flesh, except when he was unwell, or dining in the company of strangers. When he passed by the butchers' shops he used to say: "By the grace of God I have no need of these things;" and when he lived at S. Girolamo, if any flesh meat was sent him as a present, he used to give it to the boys who served the masses in the church.

Moreover, scanty as was his fare, he always managed to leave something over from his meal, and he used to put pieces of bread into a little basket, and give them to his penitents to eat, by way of mortification, when they came to see him; but in truth they often took them secretly themselves, and gave them to others out of devotion. He used good-humouredly to say, that he ate thus sparingly for fear of becoming as fat as his friend Francesco Scarlatti, a merchant who was rather corpulent.

Whenever the orders of his medical men obliged him to take any substantial nourishment, he used to complain and declare that it made him ill, and that he was over-eating himself; and he had the greatest difficulty to bring himself to comply. Towards the close of his life, after communion, when he was reminded of his breakfast at the usual hour, his answer was, "Breakfast! I have had it." At other times, when it was noticed that he had not eaten anything, and he was asked the reason, he said he had forgotten to do so. He generally had his meals in his own room by himself, with a napkin spread on a little table, and without any sort of attendance. He refrained from going into the refectory, partly that he might keep his great abstinence more secret, and partly because, after so many continuous years of spare diet, he could not eat with others without either injuring his health or seeming singular. If he consented to eat with others, which he occasionally did to win souls, as we have related elsewhere, he was careful to avoid any appearance of singularity or ostentation.

He was as sparing in his drinking as in his eating.

He had a flagon so small that it held only one glass, and he put so much water into his wine, that it deserved the name of water and wine, rather than that of wine and water. The little he drank, he did not drink till it had become flat, having perhaps remained in the flagon two or three days; and very often he drank water only. He used to drink out of a little rude cup of glass without any foot to it. He sent one of these glasses as a present to Giovanni Antonio Lucci, and told him one day that he had used it for many years in order to overcome his fastidious nature, which rebelled against the use of such a common glass. Another of the same kind, though broken, is preserved at Cracow in Poland, and on the Feast of his Canonization was carried through the city in procession, with great pomp, in a costly silver reliquary.

Indeed his abstinence was so great that several physicians of name declared upon oath, that nature could not be sustained on so little, according to ordinary laws; and it was believed that he lived rather on the virtue of the Blessed Sacrament, which he received daily, than on natural food.

Although he was so austere himself, he would not allow his spiritual children to imitate him in this respect. He told them that at table, and especially in community, they ought to eat whatever was before them, and not to say, "I do not wish for this," or "I do not like that." He desired the members of his Congregation never to ask for anything special, unless it were absolutely necessary for them, but to be contented with what God sent them. He was particularly displeased with any one who ate out of meal times; and he said to one who was in the habit of doing so,

"You will never be spiritual, if you do not cure yourself of this."

As to sleep, he was accustomed to allow himself at most four or five hours, and even this not without interruption; the rest of the night he spent in prayer and other spiritual exercises. His room was furnished, as the rule of the institute requires, like those of ordinary secular priests, though with all Christian simplicity. He slept upon two common mattresses, and in the latter years of his life he had cotton curtains; but before he was a priest, he slept very often, as we have mentioned already, on the bare floor. He generally went to bed about midnight; and although he was the last in the house to retire to rest, he was always the first to rise, unless hindered by some indisposition.

Even in his old age he did not give up disciplining himself severely. Marcello Ferro, at the sight of the heavy disciplines, made of little iron chains, which he used, begged of him several times to have some consideration for himself, but Philip always changed the subject.

His hatred of everything like ostentation appeared in his dress, which was generally like that of others, only of coarse material, but without any affectation. He never used silk, or any other material of a delicate or ostentatious character; he generally wore a serge cassock, with a cloak of stuff from Bergamo; thick and wide shoes, and the collar large; and he did not allow any of his shirt to be seen about his wrists. He was a lover of cleanliness, and held dirt in the greatest abhorrence, particularly dirty clothes; and he often quoted the maxim of St. Bernard, "*Paupertas mihi*

*semper placuit, sordes vero nunquam ;*—"Poverty has always been pleasing to me, but never dirt."

Such was the austerity of his life to the very end. Indeed the older he grew, the more he increased his abstinence and self-denial, not so much from the want of vigour common to advanced age, as indeed from the desire of suffering, and of macerating still further his worn-out body; and if any one said to him that he ought to have regard, if not to his age, at least to his decrepitude, he would either turn the conversation or answer laughingly, "Paradise was not made for cowards."

Austere as Philip was with himself, he was most gentle with others, nay affectionate beyond measure. He could not bear to see his children attempt what was too much for their strength, and he used to say that it was generally better to let the body have somewhat too much food than too little; because it is easy to subtract the too much, but when the too little has once injured a man's constitution, it is not so easy to mend the matter. He added that the devil sometimes craftily urges spiritual persons to penances and bodily austerities, in order that by indiscreet practices they may so weaken themselves, as either to be unable to attend to works of greater importance, or to give up their usual exercises of piety, and turn their back upon the service of God altogether, in alarm at the infirmity which they have brought upon themselves. He liked therefore to see men rather pay moderate attention to bodily mortification, while turning their zeal chiefly to the mortification of the will and understanding, than give themselves exclusively to bodily rigours and austerities.

## CHAPTER XV

### OF PHILIP'S DETACHMENT FROM WORLDLY GOODS

To his abstinence and purity Philip joined a singular detachment from riches and the conveniences of life. Though he never made any vow of poverty, he kept his affections far removed from all self-interest or desire of worldly goods. We have already related how he renounced his cousin's property, whilst he was a layman, and the life of poverty which he voluntarily imposed upon himself, while living in the house of Galeotto Caccia. When he was raised to the priesthood, and undertook the hearing of confessions, different persons of rank and wealth repeatedly offered him presents, even of thousands of crowns, simply as personal gifts and without any conditions restricting the application of the money to pious purposes. Philip however would never accept anything, though he might lawfully have done so, saying that he did not wish to receive the reward of his labours in this world; and if sometimes a present was forced upon him, he spent the whole of it either upon the Church or upon the poor. He had some property at Castelfranco in the Valdarno, the original settlement of the family of Neri. One day his penitent Simone Grazzini, a Florentine, told him that he ought to look after it, for it was not well that it should be in the possession of those who were not the lawful owners; but Philip

answered, "Take care never to speak to me about such things again, for I take no interest in them."

A long time before, whilst he was living at S. Girolamo, he received a letter from the husband of his sister Caterina, informing him that his father Francesco Neri was dead, and had left a will making his elder sister Caterina his heir, without any mention of him. Philip cheerfully answered that he cared for no inheritance, and that he fully ratified the arrangement made in his father's will. But afterwards being made aware that he had himself been left heir of everything during his lifetime, he instantly executed a deed, by which he fully and amply renounced all claims on his father's property, in favour of his two sisters, Caterina and Elisabetta. His sister Elisabetta, who had no heir but himself, several times wrote to him from Florence, offering him all her property; but he always declined it, telling her to provide herself with another heir, as he had fixed his eyes upon a different inheritance, of greater value, and more lasting. During the sixty years that he lived in Rome, he would never take anything from his relations; at the beginning he received one or two shirts from his father, who tenderly loved him, and once afterwards Elisabetta sent him two other shirts; but Philip desired her to send no more, and indeed those were spoiled on the road by the negligence of the bearer.

It was the custom in his time, as at the present day, to assign to each priest who went to S. Girolamo two small rooms, and a certain sum of money every month for his support. But Philip contented himself with the rooms only, and refused to take anything else; nay, having built some additional rooms, as we have

already mentioned, for the reception of his spiritual children, he gave them to the community of S. Girolamo, refusing to receive any indemnification.

As to wills and legacies, knowing that to meddle in such matters generally occasions ill-will and suspicion on the part of persons in the world, he extremely disliked having anything to do with them; so much so, that when in visiting the sick he heard any allusion to the will, he immediately took his leave, and did not return till all such matters were fully settled. Vincenzo Teccosi of Fabriano had left him, without his knowledge, a legacy of a hundred crowns, together with some other things. But after Vincenzo's death Philip, who was appointed executor, made over the whole of it to the nephews of the deceased, only keeping a watch for himself. Costanzo Tassone also left him a considerable legacy, and when the written acknowledgment of it was presented to him, he took the paper and immediately used it as a cover to a vessel which he had near him, thus showing his contempt for the writing and what it contained, and he would never hear a word of it afterwards.

Prospero Crivelli fell sick, and out of the great love he bore to the Saint, at once made a will leaving Philip his heir. The holy father had a presentiment of this; and instead of visiting him every day, as he had been accustomed to do, he kept away for a long time, during which Prospero became so much worse that he received the Viaticum and Extreme Unction. At last however the Saint's tenderness of heart prevailed, and he could not refrain from visiting the sick man in his perilous condition. He went therefore, and Prospero, as soon as he saw him, began to com-



plain, saying, "Ah! father, why have you been so long in coming to see me? The doctors have given me warning that my death was inevitable if the usual paroxysm came on to-day, and it has actually come." Philip replied, "Although I have not come to see you I have not forgotten you, nor have I omitted doing anything for you which I should have done had I visited you every day. But there is a talk in Rome that you have made me your heir, and so I have not come to see you, because I do not want either your inheritance or your money; and to show you that I will not have anything belonging to you, I am now going to St. Peter's to beg of God most urgently to restore you to health, and if it cannot be done otherwise, I will pray Him to lay your infirmity upon me." Saying this he laid his hands on the hands of the sick man, and went away almost weeping. The dying man fell asleep, and awoke in a short time perfectly restored to health.

From this aversion to riches, there sprang up in Philip's heart a most intense desire of poverty. But he was not able to put it into execution as he would have desired, because it was not compatible with his position, or with the rule of his Congregation. Inwardly, however, he loved poverty as his chosen spouse, so that he would many times exclaim: "Oh that I might be reduced to go about begging! Would that I were come to be in want of sixpence or a three-penny piece for my support, and to find no one to bestow it on me! I should esteem it a special favour of God, if I were reduced to die in a hospital!" and other wishes of a similar nature. So universal was his love of poverty, that even when he went to

the sacristy to say mass, he would say: "Give me the oldest and shabbiest things." It was the same desire to live as a poor man which urged him to beg as an alms the old shoes of Cardinal Alessandrino; and the little food which he ate, he received, during the latter years of his life, as an alms from some of his spiritual children. Thus he got Father Gallonio, without making known that it was by his desire, to induce Cardinal Cusano and Cardinal Borromeo to send him every day as an alms, the one a little flask of wine and some eggs, and the other a roll of bread; whilst Cardinal Montalto,<sup>1</sup> out of reverence for the Saint, vied with Cusano in supplying him with the very little wine he required. Father Francesco Bozio<sup>2</sup> was once present when these things were brought to him, and the Saint said, "Francesco, I am preparing myself for death; I have detached myself from everything; I want to live and die as a poor man, and so I am getting my very food by alms;" implying that he who would arrive at perfection, must have no attachment to any single thing in the world.

Philip desired to see in his disciples the same abhorrence of riches which he had himself. Discovering once that one of his penitents had got together a little property with some eagerness, he said to him, "My son, before you possessed this property you had the face of an angel, and I took a pleasure in looking at you; but now your countenance is changed; you have lost your merry looks, and are downcast; so look

<sup>1</sup> Alessandro Peretti Damasceni, nephew of Sixtus V., and known as Cardinal Montalto, b. 1571, d. 1623, famous for the immense sums he distributed in charity.

<sup>2</sup> Fr. Francesco Bozio, brother of Fr. Tommaso. See "Lives of the Companions of St. Philip," p. 125.

to yourself." The man blushed at Philip's words, and from that time changed his purpose, and devoted all his energy to accumulating riches for another life.

The Saint one day asked Egidio Calvelli,<sup>1</sup> a brother of the Congregation, if he would like to have some money. Egidio answered, "Father, I have no desire for any such thing;" upon which Philip rejoined: "In that case we will certainly go to Paradise, and I myself will take you there; but remember, on condition that you constantly beg of God never to let a desire for riches find a place in your heart." Philip kept this lesson continually before the minds of his penitents, and had almost always in his mouth his favourite maxim, that all the love we have for creatures is so much taken from God.

Francesco Zazzara, when he was young and occupied with his law studies, devoted himself to them with great earnestness in the hope of rising at court. One day the servant of God called him, and Francesco knelt down at his feet. The Saint immediately began to lavish the most unusual caresses upon him, and at the same time to lay open to him all his secret hopes and plans. "O happy you!" he said, "now you are studying; after a time you will be made doctor and begin to gain money, and to advance your family; you will become an advocate, and then some day you may be raised to be a prelate;" and so he went on describing step by step all the honours which the world could give, or which had ever passed through the youth's imagination, repeating again: "O happy you! then you will look for nothing more." Francesco thought

<sup>1</sup> Egidio Calvelli. See "Lives of the Companions of St. Philip," p. 325.

that the Saint meant what he said ; but at last Philip, pressing the youth's head to his bosom, whispered in his ear, “And then?” These words remained so deeply impressed upon the young man's heart, that when he got home he began to say to himself: “I am studying in order to get on in the world, *and then?*” Reasoning thus with himself, and unable to get these words out of his heart, he at last resolved to turn all his thoughts and plans to God, a resolution which he carried out by entering the Congregation, in which he persevered till his death, giving great edification to all who knew him. It was he who immediately after the Saint's death began to exert himself for his canonization, prosecuting the cause with the greatest zeal and pains, until God consoled him by allowing him to see it brought to a favourable issue. Indeed it seemed as if he was only kept alive to see it completed, for as soon as ever he had obtained the bull of canonization, and the office with the proper lections and prayer of the Saint, he went to his rest.

The words which proved so efficacious with Francesco Zazzara, wrought the same effects in another of Philip's penitents, a merchant who prided himself upon having amassed a great deal of money, and who was hoping in a few days' time to gain a large sum. At the Saint's simple words, “And then?” he resolved to leave off business, and afterwards became a priest, and a great servant of God.

Although Philip wished to see this detachment in all his penitents, he still more ardently desired and sought to cultivate it in the members of his Congregation. Whenever one of them was appointed to hear confessions, one of the principal admonitions which he gave

to the new confessor was, never to touch the purse of his penitents; for he used to say, that it is impossible to gain souls and money at the same time. He used often to repeat: "If you wish to gain souls, you must leave purses alone." To his penitents he frequently quoted St. Paul's words: "I seek not the things that are yours, but you." He warned not only those who were confessors, but all the members of the Congregation generally, never on any account to meddle in the matter of wills, because this is always looked upon with suspicion by people in the world, however good and holy the intention may really be. He used to say also that no one would ever advance in virtue who was in any way the slave of avarice; and that he had found by experience that sensual persons are more easily converted than the covetous, so that he called avarice the pest of the soul. When he observed that any one was subject to it, he formed a very bad opinion of him; and if an avaricious man asked his leave to fast, he would say, "My good Sir, no! give alms." When he wished to reprove any one indirectly for this vice, he would manage to bring out in the course of conversation some such sayings as, "He who wants to be rich will never be spiritual," or, "Let the young man look to his flesh and the old man to his avarice, and then we shall all be Saints:" or, "All sins displease God, but especially those of the flesh and covetousness." He considered these two vices most hard to cure, and said that we ought never to omit praying to God to preserve us from being mastered by the spirit of avarice, and to enable us to live in detachment from worldly things. In a word, he considered this abhorrence of riches so important and so fertile of good, that he used to say,

“Only give me ten truly detached men, and I do not despair of converting the world with them.” To the members of the Congregation he used to say, “God will not fail to provide you with possessions, but see to it that having possessions, you fail not in spirituality.”

## CHAPTER XVI

### HOW FAR REMOVED PHILIP WAS FROM EVERY KIND OF AMBITION

PHILIP was as much detached from the honours and greatness of the world as he was from its riches. He was looked upon in Rome as a Saint, not only by the humbler classes, but even by the great, whilst the sovereign pontiffs themselves not only loved him, but held him in the highest esteem and reverence. Yet amidst all this honour, amidst all these opportunities of advancing himself, he ever preserved his humility and self-contempt. He very seldom went to visit the Popes, or Cardinals, or other princes, and then only to promote some charitable purpose, or contribute to the general good. He would never accept pensions, benefices or dignities of any kind; nay, fully knowing that in the sight of wise men the glory of refusing dignities is as great as that which is gained by accepting them, he managed to avoid them with so much dexterity, that the very persons who wished to bestow them on him, hardly perceived his refusal; and there were very few indeed who thoroughly saw through the artifices of his humility. Thus, when he refused the canonry of St. Peter's which Gregory XIII. offered him, he excused himself on the ground that he did not know how to wear a canon's dress, and it is most certain that he refused not only the first canonries in

Rome, and some important bishoprics, but even the Cardinal's hat.

When Gregory XIV., who loved the Saint tenderly, was raised to the throne, Philip went to kiss his feet, and to congratulate him. As soon as the Pope saw him, he embraced him with great affection, and after some conversation, in presence of several persons, he took the beretta that he had worn himself when he was Cardinal, and put it on Philip's head with his own hand, saying, "We create you Cardinal," and at the same time gave directions to Marcello Vetturio, his secretary, to prepare the Brief. The holy old man immediately went up to his Holiness and whispered a few words in his ear, and then turning the whole affair into a joke, took his leave. A short time afterwards the Pope sent the beretta to him at the Oratory, desiring the messenger to say the same words; the Saint sent to thank him, and to say that he would let his Holiness know when the time came at which he should be ready to accept that dignity. It may perhaps seem to many that all this was done in joke, but those who were present were well aware, as they have themselves stated, that it was the Pope's intention really to make Philip a Cardinal; and the Saint gave the same account of the matter repeatedly to the Fathers of the Congregation. The Pope no doubt acted in this way in order to give a public mark of his feelings towards him, though he was prevailed on by the reasons Philip urged not to do violence to his repugnance.

The fact was still more clearly shown in the time of Clement VIII. Philip wanted to obtain some favour from his Holiness for a girl who was his penitent, and



being confined to his bed by illness, he sent him a petition. The Pope in his answer clearly shows that he desired to make the Saint a Cardinal, but that he would not accept the dignity. To enable the reader to judge for himself, we subjoin Philip's memorial together with the Pope's answer to it.

"Most holy Father! who am I, to have Cardinals coming to visit me, and especially the Cardinal of Florence, and Cardinal Cusano, yesterday evening? And because I had need of some manna for my medicine, the said Cardinal of Florence procured me two ounces from Santo Spirito, seeing that his Lordship had just sent a large quantity of it to that place. The same day he stayed till two hours after the Ave, praising your Holiness rather more than appeared to me to be proper; for, seeing that you are Pope, you ought to be humility itself. Christ, at the seventh hour of the night, came to incorporate Himself with me; and your Holiness has not so much as once come to our church. Christ is both God and man, and He comes to visit me as often as ever I will. Your Holiness is a mere man, born of a good and worthy father; but He is born of God the Father. Your Holiness is the son of the lady Agnesina, a very saintly lady; but He is the son of the Virgin of virgins. I could say still more, if I chose, to back up the passion I am in. I command your Holiness to do my will respecting a certain girl, whom I wish to place at Torre di Specchi. She is a daughter of Claudio Neri, and your Holiness promised to protect his children, and remember that to keep his promises is the right sort of thing for a Pope to do. Therefore hand over this business to me, and let me make use of your

name, as I may find occasion, seeing that I know best what the girl's wish is, and that I know her for certain to be moved only by Divine inspiration; and so with all proper humility I kiss your most holy feet."

The Pope, with his own hand, wrote on the petition the following words: "The Pope says that the first part of the note savours a little of the spirit of ambition, wishing to let him know that Cardinals come to visit your reverence very frequently, and mentioning it under the pretence of letting him know that such gentry are very spiritual, which he knows very well already. As to his not coming to see you, he says that your reverence does not deserve it, because you have not accepted the Cardinal's hat which he has offered you so many times. As to the obedience your reverence has given him, he gives you leave, with your usual imperiousness, to administer a good rebuke to those excellent mothers, if they do not behave as your reverence wishes. In return, he sends you an obedience to take care of yourself, and not to go back to the confessional without leave; and when our Lord comes to see you, to pray for him, and for the urgent needs of Christendom." The allusion in this note is also confirmed by the fact, that when Philip went to kiss the feet of Clement at the beginning of his pontificate, the Pope said to him in the presence of Giuseppe Caradoro, Canon of St. John Lateran, "Now I will take good care that you shall not be able to avoid the Cardinalate."

Three months before Philip died, he was talking in the most free and confidential manner in his own room with Bernardino Corona, a brother of the Congregation,<sup>1</sup> and amongst other things he said to him, "Bernardino.

<sup>1</sup> Bernardino Corona—see "Lives of the Companions of St. Philip," p. 311.

the Pope wants to make me a Cardinal ; what do you think of it ?" Corona said that he ought to accept the dignity, if for no other reason, at least for the good of the Congregation. But the Saint, taking off his beretta and looking up to heaven, exclaimed, " Paradise ! Paradise ! " Another time, when some of his penitents were speaking of the prelacies and honours of Rome, in connection with the Saint's freedom and familiarity with the Popes, Philip said to them, " My children, believe my words ; I would rather pray to God to send me my death, yea even by lightning from heaven, than the thought of such dignities ; I covet indeed the piety and the virtues of Cardinals and Popes, but not their greatness."

The Abate Marco Antonio Maffa, considering Philip's detachment, declared that of him might be truly said what St. Jerome writes in his life of St. Hilarion ; " Let others admire the miracles that he wrought, let them admire his incredible abstinence, his learning, his humility ; for my part I am most astonished at the way in which he could tread glory and honour underfoot ; " especially as Philip trod them under his feet in the very heart of Rome, amid so many dignities, and so many opportunities of aspiring to them.

But Philip was not only averse to all public distinctions ; he even renounced those which seemed in every way due to him, as father and founder of the Congregation. Having been elected perpetual superior, he was very importunate with the fathers, two years before his death, to allow him to lay down his office, saying that he was now old, and wanted a little time to prepare himself for death. The fathers, however, would not consent to gratify him in this respect, knowing

that he spoke out of a spirit of humility, and not from any real desire to be at ease. Philip then employed Cardinals Frederick Borromeo, and Agostino Cusano, to negotiate for him, and they, after speaking to Pope Clement VIII., informed the Congregation that it was the wish of his Holiness that they should comply with Philip's request. Accordingly, on the 23rd of July, 1593, the Saint retired from his office of superior, and Cesare Baronius, though he also did his best to shun the charge, was elected in his place. The fathers however, and Baronius in particular, continued to pay Philip the same respect and reverence as ever, and consulted him day by day about everything that happened, just as when he was superior; and the holy father on his part never spared himself any trouble in the service of the Congregation.

This detachment from honour and greatness which he cherished himself, he was anxious to see also in his penitents, and especially in the members of his Congregation. He did not like their frequenting palaces and courts, and as Germanico Fedeli, who had a particular gift for dealing with the great, sometimes did so, the Saint, although Germanico only went for good purposes, nevertheless said to him several times, "You will leave us, but for all that you will not become a prelate;" and so it was, for Clement VIII. took him out of the Congregation and appointed him tutor to his nephew Silvestro Aldobrandini, afterwards Cardinal of the title of S. Cesareo; and Germanico was made canon of St. Peter's, but at last renounced even his canonry, and died a simple priest.

Philip was also greatly displeased with any one under his direction who held more than one benefice.

For this fault he would rebuke even Cardinals and prelates of high rank, and he often succeeded in gaining his point with them. He refused to hear the confessions of prelates, who, notwithstanding their obligation of residence, lived at Rome without any lawful reason; and in this matter he would not excuse even Cardinals themselves, so that Baronius said of him, "Philip was a man of great freedom in rebuking whatever he knew to be wrong, especially in prelates and persons of rank, always however in the right place and at the right time." In his familiar discourses Philip used sometimes to inveigh against the vanities of the world with so much earnestness that a great many were moved by his words to make generous resolutions about their way of life. At the end of these discourses he used to add in a most touching manner, "*Vanitas vanitatum, et omnia vanitas* ;—there is nothing good in this world," or similar words, which he spoke with so much unction that they penetrated the hearts of all who heard him. He used also to say, that the contempt of riches and honours was more necessary in Rome than anywhere else, because there is more to dazzle men there than in any other city in the world. His detachment from possessions and from all desire of greatness may be summed up in one of his sayings, which he often repeated, "I find nothing in this world that gives me pleasure; and this is the one thing that gives me supreme pleasure, that I find nothing that pleases me;" and then he would add, that if a soul could keep altogether free from venial sins, the greatest pain it could feel would be the continuance of this life, because of the vehement desire it would have to unite itself with God.

## CHAPTER XVII

### OF PHILIP'S HUMILITY

THE dislike which Philip had to worldly prosperity and greatness, sprang not only from his being enlightened to discern the true value of things, and esteem them accordingly, but also from his profound humility. Such was the perfection in which he possessed this virtue, that, like St. Francis, he unaffectedly believed himself to be the greatest sinner in the world; and when he said this, it was with so much feeling that no one could doubt for a moment that it came from the bottom of his heart. If he heard of any one having committed a serious crime, he would say, "God grant that I may not do worse!" From the same feeling he used to read very often, and with great emotion, the life of St. Mary of Egypt; for he desired to imitate her in her spirit of penance, although he had not imitated her in her sins.

Every day he used to make a protest to God with the Blessed Sacrament in his hand, saying, "Lord! beware of me to-day, lest I should betray Thee, and do all the evil in the world." At other times he would say, "The Wound in Christ's side is large, but if God did not keep His hand over me I should make it larger;" and often, just before communicating himself, he would say, "Lord, I protest before Thee that I am good for nothing but to do evil." He used to say

that his only preparation for Mass was to present himself before God as one who was ready, so far as he was concerned, to be guilty of any and every evil, if God did not assist him.

Earlier in life, when he was ill, he used to say, "If God gives me back my health I will change my life, and begin to do good:" but at the close of his life, filled with a greater sense of his own nothingness, he said on the contrary, "Lord, if I recover, so far as I am concerned, I shall do worse than ever; for I have promised so many times before to change my life, and have not kept my word, that I am hopeless about myself." He thought that God chastised him for his sins; and when he was ill, he used to say that God had sent him his illness to convert him.

At confession he would shed abundance of tears, and say, "I have never done a single good thing;" and even out of confession, so penetrated was he with this idea, that when he saw young persons and thought how much time they had before them to do good in, he would say, "O happy you! O happy you! who have time to do good, whilst I have never done any." When he saw religious he often broke out into such exclamations as these: "O happy you! who have left the world, which I should never have had the courage to do." He felt this with such sincerity that he often said, "I am past hope!" and one day, meeting two Dominicans, he passed between them, saying, "Let me pass, I am without hope." The good fathers, understanding his words in their ordinary sense, stopped him and began to console him, and to ask him a number of questions; but at last he smiled and said, "I have no hope of myself, but I trust in God."

Costanza del Drago could not bear to see certain persons, who were under great obligations to the Saint, behaving badly to him, and treating him with discourtesy; and so she told him that he ought to rebuke them, and to make them aware of the truth; but Philip answered, "If I were humble, God would not send them to try me." These sentiments were so firmly rooted in him, that one day, when one of his spiritual daughters said to him, "Father, I wish to have something of yours out of devotion, for I know you are a Saint," he turned to her with a face full of anger, and broke out into the words, "Go away in God's name; I am a devil and not a Saint."

In like manner when he was ill, and some of those who were most devoted to him wanted him to make that prayer of St. Martin, "If I am still necessary to Thy people I do not refuse to work," he answered quite angrily, a thing most unusual with him, "I am not St. Martin, nor did I ever think I was; and if I believed myself necessary to anybody, I should consider myself lost." A person of rank also begged him, when he was ill, not to abandon his children so soon, but to pray to God to prolong his life, if not for his own advantage, at least for their sake, and to do good to others. But he answered with the same humility, "It has never come into my head to think that I could be of use to any one." The same person, considering the great gifts which God had granted to Philip, said to him one day, "The Saints do great things, Father;" he answered, "Nay, say not so, but rather, God does great things in His Saints." To another, who said to him one day, "Father, a temptation has come to me to think that



you are not what the world takes you for," he answered, "Be sure of this, that I am a man like my neighbours, and nothing more; so do not be troubled at this temptation; it is of no consequence."

Persuaded that he was a very great sinner, of no merit before God, and unworthy to be a priest, he made a practice of recommending himself to the prayers of all, and used to send to have prayers made for him in many different convents. He recommended himself specially to the novices of religious houses, having a peculiar confidence in their prayers. He used also to have masses said for himself, not only when he was ill, but on occasion of any temporal or spiritual want which he might have. He had them said by religious of different orders, and particularly on the feasts of the Saints whose days fell about the time, and in their churches, trusting by this means to obtain what he would not venture to expect through his own prayers. Thus he was accustomed to attribute to the prayers of others every grace and favour which he received from God. One morning, while he was saying mass at S. Girolamo, with no one present in the church but the server and one old woman, there was a great trembling of the earth. When mass was over, he was asked if he could account for the trembling; to which he replied, "It was the prayer of that old woman which caused it." So when he gave his penitents a penance, he used to beg of them to apply half of it to him; or if they were priests, to say mass for him, or at least to put him into their memento. Although he was himself so excellent a master of prayer, and had received such privileges in it, he had so lowly an opinion of

himself, that meeting two Jesuits one day in Rome, he said to them, "You are sons of a great father; I am under great obligation to him; for Ignatius has taught me how to make mental prayer." Yet in truth, before he knew St. Ignatius, he had received from God the miraculous palpitation of his heart, and had perseveringly devoted himself to mental prayer with all the sweetness and profit which we have already described.

Penetrated with this lowly opinion of himself, he could not bear to be thought good, and greatly bewailed it. If he heard that any one had a good opinion of him, he used to say, "Ah, poor me! how many ignorant peasants, how many poor girls will be far above me in paradise!" One of his penitents, returning from a pilgrimage to our Lady of Loreto, told the holy father with great simplicity, that in every place through which he had passed people thought him a Saint, and as such recommended themselves to his prayers. All that evening Philip did nothing but break out into lamentations and say, "O poor me! miserable man that I am! would that God would give me the grace to be what these people think I am!"

He avoided all marks of honour as a very pestilence; he could not bear to receive any signs of respect, and would not allow any one to remain uncovered in his presence, however lowly his condition. When he came into church, all, both men and women, tried to touch his clothes, and knelt as he passed by; Philip could not endure this homage, and used to strike them, sometimes with his long sleeve and sometimes with his hand, saying, "Get up, get out of my way." He did not like people to kiss his hands, though he allowed some

to do so, lest he should hurt their feelings by refusing ; and others because they were his penitents and lived in familiar intimacy with him. He would not generally talk on spiritual subjects with persons who were themselves reputed to be spiritual. He would never allow his own subjects to call him in the Community, Father Provost or Father Rector, but he liked to be called simply Father, and found special sweetness in this name, because it implied love rather than authority ; and hence has come the custom in our Congregation of calling the superior by the simple title of 'the Father.' He had a particular dislike to being called the Founder of the Congregation ; and he used to say expressly to those who talked to him on the subject, "I assure you I had no thought of founding a Congregation, but God in His goodness chose to make use of me as a very feeble instrument, that His power might shine forth all the more." Indeed, often and often looking back and reflecting on the past, he used to wonder that God should have deigned to make use of him.

He was a great enemy to every kind of rivalry and contention. He hated every affectation both in himself and others, whether in speaking, in dressing, or in anything else. He avoided certain ceremonies which savoured of the world, and the empty compliments practised in courts, ever showing himself a great friend of Christian simplicity ; so that when he had to deal with men of worldly prudence he did not very readily accommodate himself to them. But above all he disliked having anything to do with double-faced persons, who did not go simply and straightforwardly to work in their dealings. He could not endure liars, and

constantly warned his spiritual children to avoid them as they would a pestilence.

In all matters concerning either his own conduct or the government of the Congregation, and even in affairs of far less importance, he habitually asked the advice of others. Nor was he satisfied with consulting intelligent persons or superiors, but would seek advice from those who were altogether his inferiors, and insist upon their giving their opinion.

He took great pleasure in being made little of, and regarded as a man of no worth; for he kept always in mind that maxim of the apostle, "If any man among you seem to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise;" and many used to apply to Philip what St. Gregory Nyssen says of St. Ephrem, "he wished rather to be than to seem." Hence it was observed that he constantly tried, either by gestures, or motions, or words, or some pleasantry, to hide his great devotion; and when he had done any virtuous action, he would contrive to cover it by doing something childish as a blind.

When God was pleased to work miracles through Philip's hands (and we may really say that his whole life was one succession of miracles), the holy father acted in such a way that none, or at least very few perceived what he was doing. As St. Francis of Paula used herbs and other things to hide his miracles, so Philip used to act in a way quite out of keeping with the effects which were seen: thus, as we shall see when we come to treat of his miracles, he generally acted as if he were joking, so that the spectators did not reflect on what they saw. Many, who after his death reflected upon his miraculous life, were lost in astonishment to

think how a thing so plain and indubitable could have passed, so to speak, in silence; and were unable to come to any other conclusion than that the Saint, like Simone Salo, had obtained this as a special favour of God by his prayers. Even those who perceived his miracles, knowing the extreme displeasure it would have given him to make them known, did not dare to speak of them.

Baronius was once praising him for something connected with his miraculous powers; but Philip answered, "Cesare, I assure you it is a great subject of regret to me that people should take me for what they do; I constantly pray to God not to do anything through my instrumentality, which may give them occasion to esteem me for what I really am not; and believe me, if at times anything has happened of a supernatural character, it has been through the faith of others, and not through my merits." At other times when he visited the sick, and some of them asked him to touch them with his hands or to pray over them, he would exclaim quite angrily, with every mark of grief, "These people want me to work miracles, and I know nothing about working miracles."

In a word, his conduct towards every one was marked with the deepest humility; he was respectful in giving orders, sparing in laying work upon his subjects, most agreeable in dealing with others, full of sweetness in conversation, and so considerate that he could not bear others to suffer anything on his account. Thus, when he walked about his room, he used to put on a pair of thin felt shoes lest the noise should be disagreeable to those in the room below. He was so completely untainted by self-esteem, that those who

were continually in his company never detected in him the least appearance of complacency in anything that he did; and so great an enemy was he to pride, that although he dealt with all kinds of sinners in order to gain them to Christ, it appeared really as if he could not feel at home with the proud and haughty. Like St. Thomas Aquinas, he was never so much as tempted to vainglory. He always abhorred to speak of himself unless there was some good reason for it; so that the expressions, “I said,” “I did,” were rarely in his mouth; and he exhorted others never to make any display of self, whether in joke or in earnest, particularly in things which might redound to their credit.

He used to labour to implant the virtue of humility in his children, with even greater zeal than other virtues. Often, both in youth and old age, he used to repeat in a sort of chant, “Humility and Detachment;” and as St. John the Evangelist was continually saying to his disciples, “Love one another,” so Philip was ever repeating his favourite lesson, “Be humble, be lowly,” and laid the greatest stress upon it. Francesco Maria Tarugi was preaching one day, and exalting with great fervour the excellence and utility of suffering, to the delight of all who heard him. The holy father, who was present, fearing lest it should be an occasion of vainglory to Francesco, began to make his usual fluttering movements, and getting up, struck a pilaster with his hand, thus drawing the whole attention of the audience upon himself. He continued to do so until the end of the sermon, and then mounting into Tarugi’s place, cried out with a loud voice, that none of the Congregation had any occasion to be vainglorious or boastful, since up to that time not one of

them had shed so much as a drop of blood for the love of Christ, but on the contrary, by their service and following of their Divine Master, they had only earned for themselves honour and reverence; and he went on to discourse at some length upon this subject, to the great edification of those who were present.

He said that no one ought ever to utter a word of self-praise, either in joke or in earnest; and that if we ever do a good work, and another takes the credit of it to himself, we ought to rejoice at it, or at least should not grieve that others take from us the praise of men, seeing that it only ensures a greater honour before God. He often said to his spiritual children, "Throw yourselves into God's hands, and be sure that if He wants anything of you, He will give you all that is needful for the purpose for which He wishes to use you." He exhorted them to beg of God, if He gave them any virtue or any gift, to keep it concealed even from themselves, that so they might remain humble, and not find an occasion of vain-glory. If ever they said anything which redounded to their own credit, he immediately reproved them, saying, "*Secretum meum mihi, secretum meum mihi.*"

It was a common warning with him, that when a man puts himself of his own choice into an occasion of sin, saying, "I shall not fall, I shall not commit sin," it is an almost infallible sign that he will fall, and fall with especial damage to his soul. Hence he declared that he feared less for a man who had temptations of the flesh, and resisted them by avoiding the occasions, than for one who was not tempted at all, but did not avoid the occasions. He recommended his children often to exclaim from their

hearts, "Lord, do not trust me, for I shall certainly fall, if Thou dost not help me;" or, "Lord, Thou must look for nothing but evil from me." In temptations, he taught them that it was not well to say, "I will do, I will say;" but, with more humility, "I know what I ought to do, but I do not know what I shall do." In going to confession he recommended penitents to confess first their worst sins and those of which they are most ashamed, for by this means they put the devil more completely to confusion, and draw greater fruit from confession; and he added that sincere and frequent confession is an excellent means to obtain humility.

He was greatly displeased with those who made excuses for themselves; for he said that any one who honestly wishes to become holy should never, with the exception of a few cases, excuse himself, but always allow himself to be considered in fault, even if unjustly reprov'd; and he used to nickname people who defended themselves, "Madonna Eva,"—my Lady Eve. He laid it down as a rule, that the true medicine to preserve the soul from sin is to keep down and mortify its pride; and that when any one has been reprov'd for a fault, he should not be too much disturbed, or take it too much to heart; because people often commit a greater fault in letting themselves be cast down by a rebuke, than in the action for which the rebuke was given, excessive sadness having generally no other source than pride. Hence, he liked people after a fall to acknowledge it, and say, "If I had been humble I should not have fallen."

He did not enter into the spirit of those, who with too much trust in their own strength, ask God to send



them tribulations; he rather desired his children to pray that the Lord would of His infinite goodness grant them patience in those trials and annoyances which should happen to them from day to day. "There is nothing," he said, "more dangerous for beginners in the spiritual life, than wishing to play the master, and guide and convert others." He would have them look first to their own conversion, and keep themselves humble, lest they should begin to think that they have done something great, and so run into the spirit of pride. In order the more completely to avoid all risk of vainglory, he recommended persons to practise in their own rooms certain particular devotions, which might otherwise attract attention, and not to seek for sweetness and spiritual consolations in public places. He was urgent with them to avoid all singularity, which generally nourishes pride, especially spiritual pride. He would not, however, have any one forbear from doing any good action, simply out of a desire to avoid vainglory. For, according to the teaching of the holy fathers, he used to distinguish three sorts of vainglory; the first he called the mistress; this is when vainglory rises in the mind beforehand, and is the motive and end of the action; the second he called the companion; this is when a man does not perform an action for the sake of vainglory, but feels a complacency in doing it; the third he called the slave; and this is when vainglory rises in the performance of a good deed, and is put down the moment it rises; and he used to add, "Take care at least that it be not mistress; and though as companion it does not take away the merit of a good action, yet perfection consists in having it as a slave." Lastly, he used to say that

to arrive at the perfection of humility, four things are necessary,—to despise the world, to despise no one, to despise self, to despise being despised by others—*spernere mundum, spernere nullum, spernere se ipsum, spernere se sperni.*

## CHAPTER XVIII

### OF PHILIP'S MORTIFICATION OF HIMSELF

PHILIP joined to his humility what is usually called the virtue of mortification; and from the degree to which he carried it, both in his own life and in the guidance of his penitents, he was justly looked upon by all as the great master of it. As to himself, his chief study was to get himself thought a mean and worthless person, and he went to the utmost extent of what is lawful in his endeavours to appear as such in the eyes of men. Thus he constantly said and did things which, if looked at only externally, seemed frivolities and follies. But those who reflected on the Saint's object in doing them, soon perceived that it was the love of that wisdom which passes for foolishness in the world's esteem, which led him to walk along that road, and to guide his spiritual children along it also.

Philip mortified himself both at home and abroad, in public and in private, with every variety of mortification. He would frequently skip about in the presence of important persons, even of Cardinals and prelates, not only in out-of-the-way spots, where there were few people, but even in places of general resort, such as palaces, squares, and streets. Sometimes he jumped up or down three or four steps at a time, and then said to some one present, "What do you think of that?" He began once, on the first of August, to

jump in the square of S. Pietro in Vincola, where there was an immense concourse of people on account of the feast, and some one was heard to say, "Look at that old fool there," and thus Philip gained what he so much desired, to be thought a man of little sense.

Another time, as he was going through Rome, he met a waterman, and stopped him in the middle of the street, and begged him to have the kindness to let him drink out of one of his big barrels; the man complied, and Philip put his mouth to the barrel and drank, the waterman being lost in astonishment at the sight of a man of his appearance drinking in such a way before a crowd of people.

As he was passing one day through the Banchi, he met St. Felix of Cantalice, the Capuchin.<sup>1</sup> After many affectionate greetings, Felix asked the Saint if he was thirsty; Philip said he was, on which Felix rejoined, "Now I shall see if you are truly mortified," and forthwith offered him the flask which he carried round his neck. Philip put his mouth to it and began to drink; a crowd soon gathered, but, far from being scandalised, they said, "Here is one Saint giving drink to another." The holy father then said to St. Felix, "Now let me see if you are mortified," and taking off his hat, he put it on the friar's head, and told him to go away with it on him. St. Felix answered that he would do so, but that if the hat was taken away from him it would be Philip's loss. Away went the friar some distance with the priest's hat on; but Philip, who already well knew his goodness and mortification, sent to recover his hat, and the two Saints went their

<sup>1</sup> See "A Son of St. Francis," by Lady Amabel Kerr, 8vo, London, 1900.

way, leaving it doubtful which of the two was the most perfectly mortified.

Cardinal Alfonso Gesualdo,<sup>1</sup> who tenderly loved the holy father, gave him a fur cloak and made him promise to wear it, thinking it really needful for him, on account of his advanced age, and continual attendance in the confessional. Philip complied, and wore it for a whole month together to mortify himself; and in order that all the world might see that he wore a fur cloak, he used to walk out in it with a grave and stately pace, looking around with an air of admiration, as if he were a peacock; his one object being to draw upon himself, like another Simone Salo, the ridicule of all who saw him.

On one occasion, being invited to dine with Cardinal Alessandrino, in order to mortify himself, he took with him one of his penitents, and made him carry secretly a dish of cooked lentils in an earthenware pipkin, which, as soon as they sat down to table, he had placed before him. But the Cardinal, who well knew his virtue, far from taking his conduct amiss or despising him for it, insisted on partaking of Philip's dish with all his other guests; for though the Saint was ever trying by means of such strange devices to obtain for himself the reputation of a fool, his endeavours often failed, and produced, as on this occasion, the very opposite result, his real holiness and wisdom being well known from his other actions. This story is a specimen of many mortifications which Philip practised on the various occasions when he went to dine with others, for the sake of winning some soul to piety.

<sup>1</sup> Alfonso Gesualdo, cr. Cardinal 1561, d. 1603, Dean of the Sacred College.

On the day of the translation of the bodies of the holy martyrs Saints Papias and Maurus, when our church was quite full of people, Philip was standing near the door, awaiting the sacred relics, when his eyes falling on one of the Swiss of the Pope's guard who was on duty there, and who had a fine beard, in order to mortify himself in the midst of all the joy he felt, and to give some relief to the fervour of his spirit, he went up to him, took hold of his beard, and pulled it two or three times, caressing it in a most extraordinary manner. Some of the spectators were lost in amazement, others laughed, whilst many, who saw what Philip was aiming at, were greatly edified.

He once hit upon another device to draw upon himself ridicule and contempt; he had his beard cut on one side only, and went out with half a beard, jumping and dancing as if he had gained some great triumph. Sometimes, to mortify both himself and a brother of the Congregation, named Giulio Savera, who was a skilful barber, he used to call him to some place where there were a number of people, and make him trim his hair and beard. Numerous spectators of course gathered round, whilst from time to time Philip would say, "Ah, that will do nicely; now you are trimming me well."

He frequently went out, accompanied by his penitents, carrying in his hand a huge nosegay of broom flowers, which he smelt at every now and then, to make himself a laughing-stock, and to mortify at the same time those who were with him.

He often went about Rome without anything over his cassock, and in a pair of great white shoes, like those of a friar, which Cardinal Alessandrino had given

him as an alms; or he would begin reading in public, and then make gross mistakes on purpose, especially when he saw that persons of education were standing near and listening; and afterwards he would ask his own people, "What did such an one say?" In a word, he very seldom left the house without endeavouring by some act of mortification to bring ridicule upon himself.

At home these acts were innumerable; indeed it might truly be said that his whole life was one continual mortification; but in order not to weary the reader, a few instances only shall be selected. The holy old man would often remain in his room to receive visitors with a pair of white shoes on his feet, a tiny beretta on his head, and a red shirt over his waistcoat, reaching below his knees; and in this costume he received all who came, even though they might be persons of rank or importance, in the hope of earning their contempt. Sometimes he went down into the church on a great feast, with a jacket on inside out over his cassock, and his beretta cocked on one side, followed by one of the community with a brush, who kept brushing him before all the people. Sometimes he put on a white satin doublet which had belonged to St. Pius V.; whilst at other times he took a great cushion lined with blue cloth, and carried it on his head in public.

On one occasion on the 8th of September, when the feast of our church was being kept, and a number of Cardinals were present, Philip made his appearance in choir in the middle of vespers, in some such extravagant costume, hoping probably to receive a severe rebuke from some of the prelates who were there;

but so great was their opinion of his sanctity, that they rose when he entered, and begged him to go and sit amongst them, all, and especially Cardinal Pietro Aldobrandino, showing him the greatest courtesy. The Saint, however, answered with a smile: "It will be enough for me to sit amongst these train-bearers;" and accordingly he joined them, and remained amongst them during the rest of vespers. It must be added that this action of the Saint did not give any scandal to those who witnessed it; but only caused astonishment in those who did not understand it, and great edification in those who perceived the purpose for which he did it.

In order to get the character of a man of little judgment, he used to keep in his room books of stories, jest-books, and the like, and when people went to him, especially if they were persons of distinction, he had some of these books read, and pretended to be listening with the greatest attention and enjoyment. On one occasion, Clement VIII. sent some of the principal lords of the kingdom of Poland to converse with him, and to acquaint themselves with his eminent virtues and sanctity. When Philip heard of their arrival, before they came upstairs, he ordered Father Pietro Consolini to take one of the books we have mentioned and begin to read, and not to leave off until he gave him the signal to do so. When the nobles entered, Philip unceremoniously said to them, "Have the goodness to wait until this story is finished;" and as Father Consolini read, he kept on saying, "You see what capital books I keep, and what important matters I have read to me!" and similar words, without so much as touching on spiritual



things. The noblemen, after remaining for some time looking one another in the face, at length took their leave, completely bewildered. As soon as they were gone, Philip told Father Consolini to put the book away, saying, "We have done all that was wanted."

Besides making such uses of these books, the Saint also took care to make known that he kept them, whenever he found an opportunity, now to one great person, and now to another, in the hope of establishing a character for levity and want of prudence. With the same object he would sometimes recite from memory verses from story-books of battles, or compose some of his own on the spur of the moment. He was once at the house of the Marchesa Rangona, when the Countess d'Olivarez, the wife of the Spanish ambassador, was there. After some conversation, the Countess asked him how long it was since he had left the world. Philip answered, "I do not know that I have ever left the world;" and immediately turning to Antonio Gallonio, whom he had brought with him, he said, "Tell me, Antonio, do I not take delight in those beautiful books of poetry and tales?" Gallonio replied, "Yes, father, but what wonder, when you cannot in any other way cool the fire of your love of God?" This was a very different answer from that which Philip had intended; for he knew that that lady had formed a very high opinion of him, and he had hoped, by dwelling on these frivolities, to destroy it, and to make her think ill of him. On reaching home, therefore, he rebuked Gallonio, and said to him, "There now, a pretty answer you gave me! God forgive you! what can have been running in your head, that you should say such a thing as that?"

Lorenzo Altieri, a Roman noble, went one day to visit him, and not knowing Philip's ways, was not a little astonished to see him so merry, and to hear him speak so freely. When he took his leave, he told Angelo da Bagnarea, who had persuaded him to pay the visit, that he was anything but edified by the Saint's way of going on. Angelo answered that the holy father acted as he did in order to hide his sanctity. The nobleman hearing this, and reflecting on it, felt a great desire to visit him a second time. Meanwhile, Angelo told Philip what Altieri had said, and begged him to behave with more gravity if the nobleman should come again. Philip answered, "And pray, what would you have me do? Do you want me to be on my good behaviour, and look grave, that they may say, 'This is Father Philip,' and then begin to spout fine words! Let me tell you, if he comes again, I shall behave worse than ever." The nobleman did return, but entering into Philip's ways, and perceiving that there was something hidden under his strange exterior, he not only ceased to wonder at his habits, but began to find out his sanctity, and to derive the greatest edification from him.

In his own community he was continually behaving in such a way as to lessen the esteem of the fathers for his judgment, or at all events to hide from them what he really was. Sometimes he would invite them to run with him, and would actually set off running; sometimes he challenged them to jump; or he went into his room, and put on a red beretta, the very one that had been sent to him by Gregory XIV., and then waited for them to come to him. Some, seeing him dressed in this fashion, did not dare to enter, upon

which he called them, and asked why they did not come in. They answered, "Because we do not know, Father, whether to call you *Illustrissimo*, or plain *Reverendo*, seeing you with a Cardinal's beretta on." Then he would laugh, and take it off, saying, "What a silly fellow I am, am I not?" The acts of this kind which Philip did were innumerable; but for all that, he never succeeded in lessening the veneration of his children for his holiness.

By his continual mortifications he gained at length complete control over all his passions, and he held in suspicion any natural inclination which was not thoroughly mortified. He used to feel a repugnance to say mass with the chalices of other priests; he mortified himself and overcame it; but when he felt that he had completely conquered his nature in this respect, he had a chalice made for himself. Giovanni Antonio Lucci asked him why he had done so, and he answered, "Because I am now master of myself; hitherto I have had to use the chalices of others in order to get the better of my fastidiousness."

## CHAPTER XIX

### OF THE MORTIFICATIONS WITH WHICH PHILIP EXERCISED HIS SPIRITUAL CHILDREN

PHILIP, as we have often remarked already, was as anxious for the spiritual advancement of those under his care, as he was for his own; hence one of the most constant practices in which he kept them engaged was that of mortification. Of the innumerable mortifications of every kind by which he tried them, and which would form a whole book by themselves, it will be enough to mention some of the most common, as we have done with regard to those he practised himself. He used repeatedly to send his penitents, even those who were of noble birth or high position, to ask alms at the church doors, where there was the greatest concourse of people, and without any covering to their faces such as the Sacconi have. He made them sweep the steps and street in front of the churches, and then carry the sweepings away. He ordered them to beg at sermons, a thing which was not usual in those times, and which was considered disgraceful. When he built the rooms at S. Girolamo, he made his penitents carry a good part of the materials, like common mason's labourers. At other times he sent them to private houses to beg pieces of bread for the love of God; and he once ordered one of his spiritual children, who had on a new coat, and took a vain-

glorious pleasure in his fine clothes, to go to the door of Santa Maria Maggiore to ask alms, bidding him eat nothing that day but what was given him out of charity; and he then sent others on purpose to mock and tease him. Sometimes he sent them to the choir of the Dominicans to hear compline, and ordered them to lie at full length on benches as if they were dead until the *Salve Regina* was finished. He had also a number of pairs of spectacles, which he seldom used himself, and which he would put sometimes on one, sometimes on another, especially if they were boys, and then send them on various errands with the spectacles on. The inventions of this sort which he hit upon were almost numberless; but the end of all of them was to keep his spiritual children humble, and make them regardless of their reputation and of the esteem of men.

He made Father Francesco Bozio lie flat on his face in church, in front of his confessional, in the morning while people were coming for confession, and kept him there for a considerable space of time. Another morning he did the same to Giovan Battista Ligera, a priest who was given to low spirits and scrupulosity. Anna Borromeo, who was also troubled by scruples, after confessing to the Saint one morning, came back almost immediately to confess over again. Philip mortified her publicly in the church, in the presence of a great many persons, by driving her away without hearing her confession, and rebuking her in a loud tone of voice. The lady, without changing countenance, turned modestly away, and left the church without making any answer.

Another time he sent a young man to ring a bell

through the Campo di Fiore and the Via de' Giubbonari, populous quarters, in the most crowded part of Rome; the artisans, attracted by the unusual sound, took him for a madman, and hooted after him. Another time he sent one of his penitents through Rome with a great box-lid fastened to his shoulders on which was written in large letters, "For having eaten curds and whey!"

One day Philip went with several of his penitents to visit Cardinal Alessandrino, and, before taking leave, said to the Cardinal, "Monsignore, I wish you would give me something for these children of mine." The Cardinal, who understood the Saint thoroughly, knew very well that he wanted nothing, but was seeking an opportunity to mortify them; accordingly he went immediately to a cupboard, and took out a large cake, which he gave to him. Philip thanked him, saying, "This is just what I wanted;" and as soon as they got out of the palace he broke the cake into several pieces, and gave a piece to each of them, ordering them all to begin eating; and so they went, all munching the cake together, through the streets of Rome.

One of his penitents wishing to leave off the toupee which was worn at that time, the Saint not only would not allow him to do so, but commanded him to have it trimmed; and to mortify him still further, told him to go to Fra Felice, the Capuchin, and that he would have the charity to dress his hair for him. The good penitent went accordingly, and Fra Felice, who was in league with the Saint, instead of trimming him, shaved the whole of his head, which he bore with the most patient good humour. Another of his

penitents, a carpenter named Alberto, asked the Saint's leave to wear a hair shirt; the Saint said, "By all means, but on condition you wear it outside your jacket." The penitent readily obeyed, and wore it in this way till his death, so that people nicknamed him, 'Berto of the hair shirt.'

One of the most influential men at court had a dog which he prized very much, and petted in the most extraordinary way. It happened that one morning a gentleman of his suite brought this dog with him to S. Girolamo, and directly Philip began to caress it, the dog took such a fancy to him that it would not leave his rooms, although the Saint sent it back to its master time after time. At first the owner of the dog was very much annoyed at this; he petted it more than ever to hinder it from running away, and even kept it tied up for some days. At last, seeing that it always ran off to S. Girolamo as soon as it was let loose, although Philip had nothing to give it but a bit of bread, he said laughingly, in allusion to some of his gentlemen who by Philip's persuasion had left his service in order to serve God more perfectly, "Father Philip is not contented with taking men from me, but he must needs take from me even my animals." The holy father made great use of this dog in mortifying his spiritual children. Although it was very large, he would sometimes carry it himself, and often made one or other of his penitents, even men of rank, carry it in their arms through the streets; sometimes he set them to wash and comb it; and sometimes he made them lead it, tied with a chain or cord, through Rome, when he himself went out walking, making use of it for his own mortification as well as theirs; for

the dog was always trying to run on, and dragging his leaders after him, so that they looked like so many blind men led by a dog. The various mortifications in which this dog played its part lasted for fourteen years ; and they were so burdensome that Cardinal Tarugi used to call the animal, "The cruel scourge of human minds." It would never leave Philip, and died in his room at last.

To serve a similar end, he left a cat at S. Girolamo, when he went to live at the Vallicella, and for six years together he sent some of his people every day to look after her, and also to the butcher's to buy meat for her. When they came back, though they were often noblemen, in the presence of Cardinals or prelates, or whoever happened to be with him, he always asked after the cat, whether they had made her comfortable, how she was, if she had eaten well, with many other minute questions, as if it had been a matter of the greatest importance. When Cesare Baronius first came into his hands, he set to work to train him in a disregard of his reputation. For this purpose he sent him several times to a tavern with a bottle large enough to hold more than six quarts, and told him to ask for half a pint of wine to put into this huge bottle, but first of all to make them wash the bottle out, and then to insist upon going into the cellar to see it drawn himself, after which sometimes he had to ask them to give him change for a tester, or a gold crown ; until at length the tavern-keepers, thinking he was making game of them, would begin to abuse him lustily, and often threatened to give him a sound thrashing. When Baronius was a priest and lived at S. Giovanni de' Fiorentini, Philip used often



to make him carry the cross before funerals through the streets, by way of mortification.

In like manner, as soon as Bernardino Corona, one of Cardinal Sirleti's gentlemen, put himself under his guidance, Philip began to mortify him in every possible way. He often made him pass before his old master's palace, leading a horse by the bridle, as if he were a groom. Bernardino had a remarkably fine beard, and Philip commanded him to shave off half of it, as he himself had done. Corona set off at once to perform the obedience, but the Saint seeing his readiness told him he need not do it. All who lived with Bernardino in the Congregation knew to what a purity of life he attained through these and other mortifications; he became as pure and simple as a child, and on this account the Saint bore him the greatest affection.

One day during the summer, when Philip was called into church to speak to a lady, he went in a cassock lined with fur; as he came back from the church, he took it off in the courtyard and put it, inside out, on Marcello Vitelleschi, a Roman noble and one of his penitents. Vespers were being sung at the time, and he ordered him to go into the choir with a message to Cesare Baronius, who was then superior. The youth was ashamed to be seen in that guise, and went behind the benches to speak to him, for the choir was not arranged then as it is now. The Saint perceived Marcello's device, and as soon as he came back, sent him again on the same errand in his strange costume, enjoining him to pass through the middle of the choir, which Marcello did.

Father Antonio Gallonio was so little able to bear anything like heat, that even in the most rigorous

winter he wore nothing but a serge cassock ; the Saint, in order to mortify him, made him wear a fur cloak over his cassock for three months together, and that in the heat of summer. Father Antonio knew some songs in the Norcian patois ; and when Cardinals and other persons of rank came to the house, Philip would order him to sing them in their presence, or sometimes in presence of nuns ; mortifying at once himself, the poor priest, and the audience. Before Gallonio was a priest, Philip ordered him to abstain from communion for six or eight months, which his great devotion made a heavy mortification to him. When he was made priest, he used to shed tears at mass through the greatness of his fervour ; whereupon the Saint ordered him to say mass only three times a week ; and it was not till a long time after that he allowed him to celebrate five times a week. He often sent him before the meals began into the middle of the refectory to ask for his dinner or supper for the love of God ; a mortification to which he put others also ; and at times he made him carry several loads of bricks to different places.

The devil once put into the mind of a member of the Congregation thoughts of disesteem of Philip, to make him lose faith in the counsels the Saint gave him in confession. At last he manifested the temptation to the holy father out of confession, and Philip, on the lookout as usual for every opportunity of mortifying both himself and others, commanded him to declare these thoughts publicly in the refectory. The penitent obeyed, and Philip listened with every mark of unusual joy. This publishing of temptations before others was a remedy which Philip often used

when he saw the person was able to bear it, for overcoming the temptations themselves. Fra Ignazio Festini, a Dominican, relates that he once, in obedience to Philip, manifested publicly some temptations which otherwise nothing in the world would have induced him to tell, and that no words can express the inward satisfaction and contentment which he felt in doing so, and likewise that as a remedy it succeeded perfectly.

Agostino Manni,<sup>1</sup> of Canziano, a priest of the Congregation, a man of great devotion and charity, who died in 1618, having on one occasion preached an excellent sermon in our church, Philip sent for him and ordered him to deliver the same discourse six times running, and not wittingly to alter a single word. Agostino obeyed, and when the people saw him mounting the pulpit, they said, "There is the father who has only got one sermon!"

That which Philip desired to mortify above all things was *reasoning*,<sup>2</sup> especially when there was some show of plausibility in it, a kind of mortification of exceeding difficulty, but most highly prized and commended by the Saints. As an illustration of the importance which Philip attached to it, we shall relate an incident which happened on one occasion to Baronius. The Pope, to whom the good father had presented his Annotations on the Roman Martyrology, assigned him, in spite of his refusals, a certain sum of money in order to enable him to go on with his Annals. No sooner did Philip hear of this than he at once laid hold of it as an opportunity of mortifying him. He signified to Baronius that it was his will that he should now contribute to the expenses of the house,

<sup>1</sup> See "Lives of the Companions of St. Philip," p. 173, 8vo, London.

<sup>2</sup> See *infra*, p. 309.

as the others did, seeing that he could no longer plead the excuse of impossibility. Baronius thought this very hard, and although he was ordinarily most exact and perfect in his obedience to the Saint, in this matter *passus est aliquid humani*, he suffered some human frailty to get the better of him; and in fact he had no other money than the Pope's allowance, and that he was obliged to spend in getting manuscripts copied at the Vatican. He made various attempts to induce the Saint to give up this idea; but Philip, who was aiming at his spiritual good, stood firm, and would not yield to any persuasion or argument. At length the temptation increased upon Baronius so strongly that he went to Father Tommaso Bozio and urgently besought him to try to dissuade Father Philip from doing violence to his feelings in this matter, for that he really felt tempted to leave the Congregation rather than contribute to it from this money. Father Tommaso undertook the office with the greatest zeal, but Philip was firmer than ever, and only answered, "Tell Cesare plainly that he must either contribute or leave; no man is necessary to God." Father Tommaso hearing this, and not knowing what he could do further, exhorted Baronius to submit at all costs to what the Saint had ordered, and to remember that all his success as well in learning as in devotion was entirely owing to Philip. Baronius accepted the good advice and returning to himself went straight to Philip's room, where kneeling down before him, he humbly begged his pardon for the resistance he had made, and offered him not only all the little money that he had, but all that he might ever acquire in his lifetime, and his whole self.

Then Philip said to him, "Now you have done all I wanted; I do not wish for any of your money, but learn another time to submit yourself promptly to obedience."

The mortification to which he put F. Francesco Maria Tarugi was hardly less severe. Indeed, he made a point of mortifying more especially those who were distinguished for nobility or talent, knowing how greatly, besides the benefit to themselves, others are edified by it. One day he sent for F. Bozio and ordered him to go immediately and tell Tarugi to leave the Congregation, because his conduct was not becoming. Tarugi was filled with anguish at this unexpected message, and spent his time day and night in examining his actions to find out what had been wrong. But not discovering anything by which he could have deserved the Saint's indignation, after many and long prayers he went to F. Bozio, and implored him to be his mediator with Philip, to ask what his offence had been, and to offer on his behalf to submit to any penance rather than leave the Congregation. Bozio undertook the office, though from the firmness he had witnessed in Philip he greatly feared that he should not succeed. He went with Tarugi, whom he left outside the door of the Saint's room, and then told Philip that he had brought back the wandering sheep, and did not doubt that he would receive him as before with tenderness and love. At this prayer Philip seemed to be appeased, and as if he knew by a heavenly light that Tarugi was at the door, told Bozio to bring him in. No sooner had he entered than he threw himself at the Saint's feet, but was unable to utter a word through grief and tears.

Philip said to him, “Well, since you ask pardon I grant it to you; but take care not to behave again in such a way as to render yourself unworthy to live in this house;” and he then dismissed him perfectly consoled. Philip afterwards said to Father Bozio, “You would hardly believe to what a degree of merit Tarugi has attained during the last few days through this mortification.”

The Saint laid so much stress on the necessity of taking the utmost pains to mortify the intellect, that he used to say, “A man’s sanctity lies within the compass of three fingers,” and as he said this he touched his forehead and then added in explanation of his meaning, “the all-important thing is the mortification of the *razionale*,” a word which was constantly in his mouth to signify excessive reasoning, and wishing to act the prudent man and discuss everything. It was one of his maxims that a man who cannot endure the loss of honour is incapable of making progress in spiritual things. Hence, whenever any one came into his hands who had a reputation for sanctity, he used to try his virtue by mortifications, and if he found it stand the trial, he honoured it as real holiness; if not, he suspected it as delusion.

In a word, like another Giovanni Colombini, of whose spirit he had deeply drunk, he kept his spiritual children in an incessant exercise of mortification, so far as was practicable for secular priests. Sometimes when one of the fathers was preaching and was in the full fervour of his discourse, he would send another to tell him to hold his tongue and come down from the pulpit, for that he himself was going to preach; he would frequently order some one to get up and preach a

sermon off-hand, though the result showed that he knew well what he was doing; for when preached in obedience to him, the unprepared sermon was always better than the well-studied discourse would have been from the same preacher. Sometimes he sent them to booksellers' shops to ask for books with extravagant titles, such as, "Piovano Arlotto," "Matteo Maria Bojardo," "Æsop's Fables," and the like, enjoining them expressly to ask with a loud voice, so that they might be heard by everybody, and thus fully taste the humiliation. At other times he made them go from the Vallicella to S. Girolamo without a cloak, or with torn sleeves, or holes in their garments; so that one day a gentleman, who saw one of them in the street, offered him a pair of sleeves for the love of God; and the Saint, learning that his penitent had refused the alms, sent him back to the gentleman to say, that although he had refused the sleeves before, he should now be very glad to accept them, as he was in want of them. The gentleman accordingly gave them to him, and the Saint made him wear them. He ordered some to kiss the feet of the visitors who came to see him; others to dance and sing in the presence of Cardinals and prelates. He made several go about with a skull-cap of white cloth upon their heads, and others with a huge hat and a cord passing under the chin after the antique fashion. He would hang a large rosary like a hermit's round their necks, and make them go to church in that costume, or deck them out with beards of taffety and gold fringe. He often sent F. Pietro Consolini about Rome with purple taffety and gold lace round his hat: and he repeatedly sent Giuliano Magaluffi into the refectory during supper, with a

monkey shouldering a gun and wearing a beretta on its head, commanding him to walk about the refectory in that way. Thus he gave one mortification to one, and another to another, as he judged expedient, continually repeating, "My children, mortify yourselves in little things, that you may afterwards more easily mortify yourselves in great ones."

It is a wonderful fact, moreover, that Philip never laid a mortification on any one, however extravagant it might be, without its being willingly accepted, and producing in the penitent's soul the fruit at which the Saint was aiming. In fact he knew who were capable of bearing such trials, and who were not. There were some who were thirty or forty years with him, to whom he never gave a single mortification in word or deed; others had scarcely come under his direction before he began to impose the most extravagant things upon them; and not only had he the gift of discerning those who were capable of submitting to mortifications, but also the nature of the mortifications they were capable of bearing. To some he gave very severe mortifications, to others moderate ones, to others very little ones, according as he saw good for them, making it a great point that they should accept them with alacrity.

He esteemed the virtue of mortification so much, that he had constantly on his lips that sentence of St. Bernard, "*Spernere mundum, spernere nullum, spernere se ipsum, spernere se sperni;*" but reflecting on the difficulty of arriving at such perfection, especially at the last degree of it, he used to add, "*Et hæc sunt dona superni.*" "But these are gifts of the most High;" or, "I have not got to this point;" or, "I wish I could



reach such perfection ;” or some other expression, showing at once the importance he attached to mortification, and his opinion of its difficulty.

Although the practice of mortification, both of himself and others, was quite one of Philip's specialities, yet in the latter years of his life he was more sparing in imposing outward mortifications ; for he said that since these practices had become such well known marks of spirituality, they were no longer so fruitful, and might even become occasions of pride and vain-glory.

## CHAPTER XX

### OF PHILIP'S PATIENCE

WE now come to the virtue which the Saints consider the touchstone of all sanctity, that is, patience. Besides what we have mentioned in the first book, in giving an account of the exercises which he introduced at S. Girolamo della Carità, we may say that his whole life, as it was one continuous act of mortification, so also was it one unbroken exercise of patience, because of the contradictions he met with in all that he did.

He was the butt and laughing-stock of the courtiers in almost every palace. They said everything bad of him which came into their minds, especially whilst he was living at S. Girolamo; so that generally, no sooner did any of his penitents appear at court, than he was asked what Padre Messer Filippo was doing, and what good things he had eaten that morning, how many capons had been presented to him, and how many dainty dishes his spiritual children had sent him, with other similar pieces of disrespect and impertinence. This sarcastic talk lasted for years and years, so that Rome was full of it, and through all the shops and counting-houses, the idlers and scapegraces did nothing but ridicule Philip or his penitents. All this was of course known to the Saint; and every one was astonished, not only at his patience, but at the great joy he evinced whenever he heard that he was ridiculed

in this manner. A person of rank, who used himself to make game of him, reflecting upon his unwearied patience, conceived such an esteem for him, that he sent continually to recommend himself to his prayers, and wherever Philip was the subject of conversation, extolled his perfect and truly wonderful goodness.

There were some, who out of a spirit of jealousy, or for other reasons of their own, could not bear to see the exercises of the Oratory prospering, or the odour of Philip's sanctity daily increasing. These persons laid hold of every occasion they could to spread abroad a bad opinion of him. One day there was a cry all through Rome that Father Philip of S. Girolamo had been put in prison for immorality. The foundation for this report was that a servant who lived there, and who was also named Philip, had been imprisoned for that cause; but his calumniators, making use of the ambiguity of the name, went about fastening the rumour on the Saint. When Philip heard of it, he did not take it in the least amiss, but with the greatest calmness contented himself with a simple smile.

On one occasion he went to speak to a prelate on behalf of Fabrizio de' Massimi, a Roman gentleman, and one of his penitents, who had been falsely accused of a capital crime, which the Saint knew for certain he had not committed. The prelate not only refused to listen to the truth, but reviled Philip in such a manner that Father Pompeo Pateri, who was present, was lost in astonishment at the conduct of the dignitary, and still more at the patience and gentleness of the Saint in bearing his insults with such a cheerful countenance; in the end, however, the innocence of the accused was proved, and he was acquitted accordingly.

A similar incident occurred in the church of S. Giovanni de' Fiorentini, where a gentleman's servant began without any cause to insult Philip with such insolence of manner and language, that Fabrizio Maria Zacchetti, a canon of St. Peter's and a man of great learning, unable to endure any longer the sight of such impertinence, was on the point of laying hands on the man, but seeing on the other hand the gentleness and joy with which the holy father bore it all, he restrained himself, and was so edified by the sight of his patience that from that day forward he honoured him as a Saint.

Another time, when he was out walking with some of his spiritual children, he met a Cardinal who had given ear to evil reports against him; so strongly was he prejudiced against Philip, that as soon as he saw him he ordered the carriage to stop, and gave him a most bitter reprimand in public. The Saint, knowing the rectitude of the Cardinal's intention, was not in the least disturbed, but with his usual smile went up to him and whispered a few words in his ear. The countenance of the Cardinal changed instantly, and showing the holy father great marks of kindness he said, "Go on then acting as you are doing now."

It was not strangers only who furnished Philip with opportunities of practising patience. He often had occasion to exercise it towards his own spiritual children, and even towards those who were under the greatest obligation to him. There were not wanting amongst them some who, unable to enter into his real character, thought him a simple and ignorant man, and treated him accordingly; but he did not show the least resentment, or alter the least his kind

looks towards them. Once, when an important affair regarding the Congregation was under discussion, a letter on the subject was presented to the holy father as superior, and whilst he was reading it, one present, thinking the letter contained something which he did not want Philip to know, insolently snatched it out of his hand, saying that it was not to be read. The Saint took the affront with such incomparable meekness, that neither by look, word, or gesture, did he betray the slightest emotion. But a long time afterwards, he gave orders to F. Germanico Fedeli that after his death the offender should be corrected, in order that he might acknowledge and do penance for his fault, and so obtain pardon and indulgence of God.

A great number of the insults which Philip received must be passed over in silence, for the sake of brevity; we will only add that Francesco Rosano, a philosopher and theologian of considerable note, seeing the wrongs which the Saint suffered daily, especially at the time he was establishing the exercises at S. Girolamo della Carità, said, "Philip is in his right place at the church of St. Jerome, who had to bear such great contradictions and persecutions as long as he lived."

But it is remarkable that those who in any way harassed the Saint, either repented and came to ask his pardon, or were before long chastised by God. A person who had been speaking against him one evening, in going out of his house the next day, fell over a steep place and was in danger of losing his life, though he escaped with a serious injury to one of his legs; and he confessed that he believed this

judgment to have come upon him for having spoken ill of Philip; he added that if he had spoken as he did with a malicious intention, he was sure he should have broken his neck; and from that day forward he could not endure to hear any one say the least word against the Saint.

A noble lady of great age, who was in danger of death from a severe illness, was repeatedly visited by Philip, who went to hear her confession. Her nephew, a very influential man, seeing Philip go to visit his aunt so often, was afraid that she might leave the Congregation her property, and the Saint was given to understand that he was to discontinue his visits. However, as the good of her soul was his only motive, he persisted in spite of the threat; whereupon the gentleman, more angry and more suspicious than ever, ordered the servants not to let him in on any account. Philip broke through all these oppositions, and continued to visit her, without paying any regard either to menaces or to whatever else of a worse sort they might devise against him. The fathers of the Congregation, hearing of this, entreated the Saint not to go there any more, as he was putting himself into danger by it. Philip answered, "I go to the sick woman for the good of her soul, and if I should be killed in consequence, it would be the best piece of luck that could happen to me." The fathers rejoined, that nevertheless there were cases in which it was better to give way. Then Philip said, "Well, you need not be afraid, I shall not be hurt; the sick woman who is so ill will shortly get well, and her nephew, who is in such good health, will die within a fortnight." Every word of this prediction came true;

the lady recovered, and lived a long time, and the nephew died in a fortnight.

Another time the Saint having gone, as usual, with his spiritual children to the Seven Churches, a person who did not approve of this practice said contemptuously to his companion, "What do you think? These Gerolimini (the name given at first to the Fathers of the Oratory) have gone to the Seven Churches, and have taken with them seven asses loaded with tarts;" adding other idle jokes, and turning the whole thing into ridicule. Not many days afterwards, the speaker was murdered, and the listener died.

A prelate, whose name is purposely not given, calumniated the Saint to one of the Cardinals, with the view of raising opposition and hindrance to the exercises at S. Girolamo; the calumny was of so serious a nature that the Cardinal spoke to the Pope about it. Philip, although he knew all that had happened, never said one word against his accuser; nay, he went very often to that same Cardinal, from whom he received many mortifications, thus making use of the occurrence as a means for subduing himself more than ever. Meanwhile it happened that an attack was made upon the prelate by the monks of Monte Oliveto, who said that he was an apostate from the religious state, and had been five years in their order. The poor prelate fell ill from vexation, and died within a few days, almost in despair. The Saint, forgetting his injuries, visited him several times during his illness; and when the news of his death was brought to him, he was greatly grieved, and asked one who was with him to reach him a Bible; he opened it as it were at random and lit upon those

words in the sixth chapter of Proverbs: "A man that is an apostate, an unprofitable man, walketh with a perverse mouth. He winketh with the eyes; presseth with the foot; speaketh with the finger. With a wicked heart he deviseth evil; and at all times he soweth discord. To such a one his destruction shall presently come; and he shall suddenly be destroyed, and shall no longer have any remedy." Many stories of the same kind are withheld, lest the persons concerned should be discovered; but the instances were very numerous, both of individuals and entire families, who came to a bad end because of their opposition to the holy father.

But to return to Philip's patience: he carried this virtue so far that he not only bore with his persecutors, but even loved them tenderly. He was not contented with praying for them, but often went expressly to St. Peter's or to St. Maria in Traspontina<sup>1</sup> to do so, besides getting the prayers of his penitents, to whom he often gave an obedience to say a Pater and Ave for his persecutors. Patience so completely became a habit with him, that he was never seen in a passion, and it appeared as though he did not even know how to be angry. Sometimes, for the good of his spiritual children, and in order to correct them, he would put on a severe look, but as soon as they were gone he would turn to any one who happened to be with him and say, "Did not you think I was in a passion?" and his face immediately recovered its usual calmness. Sometimes he would even laugh with those with whom he had just before pretended to be angry, and would say, "Well, are you scandalized

<sup>1</sup> See ARMELLINI, *op. cit.* p. 348.



at me, eh?" One morning, as he was coming out of his little chapel after saying mass, he met Father Antonio Gallonio; no sooner did he see him than he pretended to be greatly displeased with him, and without rhyme or reason gave him a severe rebuke, attacking him so sharply that Gallonio could not conceal his emotion. The aged Saint perceiving this, in the very height of his pretended passion said, "Antonio, give me a kiss," and he insisted upon his kissing him, in order to remove any lurking feeling of bitterness from his heart. This action of the Saint Cardinal Crescenzi attributes not so much to his desire of exercising Gallonio in mortification, as to his wish to hide the wonderful paleness which used to overspread his face after he had said mass, so that he seemed like a dead person.

No one ever saw Philip melancholy; those who went to him always found him with a cheerful and smiling countenance, yet mixed with gravity; and this was so well known amongst his disciples that they used to say, "You may say or do what you like to Father Philip and insult him as you please, but you cannot put him out of temper." Once he was told that some people had called him an old dotard, at which he was greatly pleased. Another time he heard that a religious had declared that he was in his dotage, and it put him into such good spirits that he told Cardinal Cusano of it with immense glee, and sending for the religious, caressed him with marks of the warmest affection. Again, when he was told that people thought him mad for carrying a dog in his arms about Rome, he laughed and was highly delighted; and another time, when he heard that people

had been preaching publicly against the Institute of the Oratory, he did not answer a word or betray the least emotion.

Philip showed equal patience in the sicknesses which his great labours brought on almost every year. They often lasted fifty or sixty days at a time, and he received Extreme Unction four times, but he always had the same calm and joyous countenance. Once when the physicians had given him over and he saw all around him in affliction at the idea of his death, he said with a firm voice and undaunted courage, "*Paratus sum et non sum turbatus.*" He never spoke of his illness except to the medical men, and never gave any outward sign of the pain he suffered, however sharp it might be, but even joked in the midst of it. When he spoke, it was to break out into such exclamations as these: "My Lord, if Thou wouldst call me, here I am;" "My Love, I have not known Thee, I have not done any good;" and whilst he spoke thus, he used to shed tears. He always continued to hear the confessions of his penitents, unless the physicians expressly forbade it; and if the fathers begged him to desist because of his illness, he would tell them to let him go on, for that hearing confessions was a recreation to him; so great was his zeal for the salvation of souls. He was never heard to change his voice as invalids generally do, but spoke in the same sonorous tone as when he was well. Indeed, when he was ill, instead of receiving consolation from his visitors, he ministered consolation to them, and entertained them in his usual winning way, so that it always turned out that the charity was rather on his side than theirs.

There was a kind of miracle too about his recoveries

for no sooner was he able to leave his bed, even when he was old and the indisposition had been long and serious, than he was able at once to say mass and perform all his other duties. There was never any sign of convalescence about him, so that very often after being in the evening almost at the point of death, he might be seen in the morning performing his ordinary duties as freely as if he had never been unwell. When his physicians were expressing their surprise one day at these sudden recoveries, Philip, to show that they were graces from above, said to them, "Let me tell you, it is not you who have cured me, but that reliquary," pointing to one which St. Charles had given him, and which contained a piece of the wood of the Holy Cross, and relics of Saints Peter and Paul, and of St. Francis.

The following incident is sufficiently connected with our subject to find a place here. One one occasion, when Philip was dangerously ill at S. Girolamo, he asked Giulio Petrucci to give him a little water mixed with pomegranate wine. Giulio reflected for a moment whether it would not be better to put some sugar into it, to temper the crudeness of the water and the acidity of the pomegranate juice; deciding to do so, he looked about for some sugar but could not find any, and while he was anxiously debating with himself what to do, suddenly a youth stood before him whom he had never seen before, holding a loaf of sugar in his hand. Giulio was so eager for the sugar that he did not give the strangeness of this circumstance a thought, but hastened to sweeten the wine and water. Philip, having drunk it, turned on the other side, and had remained quiet for a very short time when he rose and said, "Giulio!

I am cured," and the next morning got up and went about his usual duties. Giulio, reflecting afterwards on the occurrence and seeing nothing more of the youth, understood that the goodness of God had sent the sugar miraculously to succour His servant in his need, and did not doubt that the youth was an angel of the Lord.

Another time also at S. Girolamo, he was so ill that the physicians declared the case hopeless; and having received the Most Holy Viaticum and Extreme Unction, he was expecting his departure from hour to hour. One of those who were attending on him was Pietro Vittrici, of Parma, one of his penitents, who was a great benefactor of the Congregation, and who was then in the service of Cardinal Boncompagni, afterwards Gregory XIII. The Saint asked Pietro to give him a little water to moisten his mouth, and when he had drunk it, moved into the middle of his bed and turned his face towards the wall, like another Ezechias; he remained so for a quarter of an hour, and was then perfectly well, and returned without any convalescence to his usual duties.

Philip gave his spiritual children many admonitions and maxims on the subject of patience. He said that nothing more glorious can happen to a Christian than to suffer for Christ; and that he who really loves God could have no greater cause for sorrow than to find himself without any opportunity of suffering for Him; for the greatest tribulation which can befall a servant of God is to have no tribulations. When he heard any of his disciples saying that they could not bear adversities, he used to say to them, "Nay, say rather that you are not worthy of so great a good, for

there is no surer or clearer mark of God's love than adversity." When a confessor was once complaining to him that he was unjustly persecuted, Philip reproved him, saying, "How can you teach others patience, if you are so wanting in patience yourself? My son, the greatness of our love for God is known by the greatness of our desire to suffer for His love." He used to say further that there is nothing which produces contempt of the world more quickly, or unites the soul to God more closely, than being tried and afflicted, and that those who are not admitted as scholars to this school may well be called unfortunate.

He used to reiterate that in this life there is no purgatory; it is either all hell, or all paradise; for he who suffers tribulation with patience enjoys paradise, and he who does not suffers hell. Another favourite maxim of his was this; that when God sends extraordinary sweetnesses to the soul a man should prepare himself for some serious tribulation or temptation, and should ask of God, whilst he enjoys that little unusual fervour, grace and fortitude to bear whatever it may be the will of His Divine Majesty to send upon him. He said also that during such spiritual sweetnesses a man ought to be very much upon his guard, because there is always danger of sin behind them; and therefore he ought immediately to humble himself, and to pray that the danger which they foreshadow may not be mortal sin, but some other kind of tribulation, which may not separate him from the Divine grace, and that whatever it is he may not offend God in it, even venially.

In order to animate his disciples to this virtue of patience, he exhorted them never to lose heart, because

it is God's way to make human life a sort of web, sending first a trial and then a consolation; he instructed them never to fly from a cross, for they would be sure to light upon a greater one, and that there is no finer thing on earth than to make a virtue of necessity, instead of doing what men mostly do,—manufacture crosses for themselves.

He did not however advise his penitents to ask tribulations of God, but wished them to walk most warily in this matter, for a man is doing no little thing when he bears what God sends him day by day. Yet he himself on one occasion, compassionating a poor invalid given over by the physicians, begged of God, in the most absolute manner and with an act of heroic charity, the life of the sufferer, offering himself to undergo his suffering and danger; and his prayer was answered to the letter.

He recommended some, who had been tried in the service of God for a long time, to imagine in the time of prayer that all manner of insults and affronts were offered to them, such as blows, wounds, and the like; and then to make acts of charity in imitation of the charity of Christ, and from their hearts forgive the injuries offered them; and he said that this exercise would bring with it a great increase of spiritual strength. To one person, however, who begged him to teach him this exercise, he said, "No, it will not do for you, nor for all."

With these and similar holy admonitions did Philip confirm himself and others in the virtue of patience.

## CHAPTER XXI

### OF PHILIP'S PERSEVERANCE AND STABILITY IN WELL-DOING

THE last of Philip's virtues of which we have to speak is that which was, as it were, the complement of all the rest. He knew well that no action, be it ever so great or heroic, can lay a just claim to the title of virtue, which is not accompanied by stability and perseverance; and therefore from boyhood upwards he aimed at these qualities in all he did. When he came to Rome and learned that it was the will of God that he should labour in His vineyard there, there did he remain constantly for sixty years, and never went beyond the gates, except so far as the circuit of the Seven Churches extends. He was often recommended change of air by the doctors; his friends repeatedly begged him most importunately to go with them to different places, and his relations at Florence especially urged him to pay a visit to his own country. But they never could move him from his determination; for, as he said to Vittoria Gottifredi, superioress of Torre di Specchi, he recognised no native land but heaven.

When he became a priest and confessor, his attention was continually fixed on the proper discharge of those two offices of the priesthood and the confessional; so that we may really say that the whole

course of Philip's life was made up of praying, reading holy books, hearing and preaching the Word of God, administering the Sacraments, visiting the churches and the sick, and other pious and religious works.

When he had founded the Congregation, he would not undertake any other work, in order to be able to attend exclusively to the end for which he had established it; and in the same way he would not accumulate many exercises in it, because he was contented, he said, with three things, prayer, the administration of the Sacraments, and the word of God; his great object being that he himself and the other members of the Congregation might persevere with the more constancy in these three.

This love of perseverance and stability he was always endeavouring to instil into the minds of his penitents; for Philip was never contented with practising a virtue himself, but was always on the watch to cultivate it in others. He was continually quoting our Blessed Lord's words, not, "he who shall begin," but, "he who shall persevere to the end shall be saved." He taught his spiritual children that the best help towards the acquisition of this virtue is discretion; and that we must not want to do everything in a day, or expect to become Saints in four days; to which he added that it is a more difficult thing to restrain those who want to do too much, than to stir up those who do too little. Another advice which he gave was, to take care not to become so attached to the means as to forget the end; and that it is not well to be so taken up with mortifying the flesh, as to omit to mortify the brain, which after all is the principal matter.



He was very much opposed to the omission of regular devotions, such as going to confession on the appointed days, and hearing mass on week days, for the sake of every little occasional distraction that might arise. He also disliked to see persons loading themselves with a number of spiritual exercises; for there are some who by little and little take upon themselves the obligation to say so many rosaries and offices, that they presently tire of them, and either do not persevere, or if they persevere, say them without devotion. Hence his counsel was to undertake but little, and then to keep to that little without intermission; for if the devil can only get us to drop one exercise, he will easily persuade us to drop a second, and then a third, until all our heap of devotions melts into nothing; hence he used frequently to say to his disciples, "*Nulla dies sine linea.*"

He exhorted his penitents to renew their good resolutions frequently, and never to be cast down because of the violence of their temptations against them, for God, when He wishes to grant any virtue, generally allows the soul to be first harassed by temptations against it; and as a remedy for discouragement, he recommended that when a temptation comes upon us, we should call to mind the sweetnesses we have felt in prayer at other times, and we shall thus easily overcome it.

He used to say that fervour is generally great at the beginning, and then the Lord "*fungit se longius ire,*" "makes as though He would go further," and that we must then stand firm and not be troubled; for God sometimes withdraws His most holy Hand from pouring out His sweetnesses upon us, in order to try our

fortitude and perseverance; and then if we resist and overcome our tribulations and temptations, the sweetnesses and heavenly consolations return; nay, in the end our Lord redoubles them.

He said that there are three degrees in the spiritual life: the first he called the animal life; this is the life led by those who run after sensible devotion, which God mostly gives to beginners, in order that they may be drawn on by its sweetness just as an animal by a sensible object, and so give themselves to the spiritual life: the second he called the human life; it is the life of those who cease to experience sensible sweetness, but fight against their passions in the strength of virtue, a thing which is proper to man: the third he called the angelic life; it is the degree at which those arrive, who have been exercised for a long time in the taming of their passions, and at length receive from God a quiet, tranquil, and, as it were, angelical life even in this world. Of these three degrees Philip exhorted his penitents to persevere in the second, because assuredly God in His own time will grant the third.

As to young men, he said that avoiding evil practices and keeping good company are as necessary to their perseverance in the ways of virtue, as the frequenting of the Sacraments. He did not very readily put faith in them, whatever signs of devotion they might give; so that sometimes when persons spoke to him of certain youths making great progress in the spiritual life, he would say, "Wait till they are fledged, and then let us see what kind of flight they make."

He exhorted all to pray without ceasing that God of His goodness would vouchsafe to grant them the gift of perseverance, and he introduced the custom of

saying in the Oratory every evening five Paters and Aves, to obtain from the Divine Majesty perseverance in His holy service. "But," he said, "in order to begin well and end better, two things are necessary,—to be devout to the most holy Mother of God, and to hear mass every morning, when there is no legitimate hindrance."

When any of his penitents had a desire for the religious state, in order to insure their perseverance in it, he used to begin by mortifying them for a long time, and breaking down their self-will in the things to which he saw they had the greatest repugnance. Many, in consequence, who entered upon the religious life under his direction, have repeatedly said, that if the holy father had not dealt with them in this manner, they should not have persevered. A Capuchin father who visited the Saint kissed his hand and said, "O Father, the mortifications which I used to receive from your reverence are nothing compared to those of the religious state; but I am sure I may say confidently, that if it had not been for yours I should never have been able to go through the others." The holy father used also to say, that if a religious found himself in an order which had degenerated, and lived in it with observance and edification, he ought to remain in it, for God may wish to make use of him at some time to renew the spirit of the order.

He held all change in suspicion; and did not like men passing from one good state to another, even though it were to a better, without great deliberation; for he said that the devil often transforms himself into an angel of light, and makes men, under the pretext of doing better, leave even what is good. It was not

only in the lives of religious that he desired to see this stability, but in those of laymen also; and his great aim with his penitents was, that when they had once made their choice of a state, they should persevere in it, and not for any light motive change either their profession or their residence.

Thus Massimiano Borgo, one of his penitents, had entered into the service of a great person, somewhat against his own will, and only on condition that he was not to be occupied in secular affairs, so that he might be able to attend to his spiritual exercises and to the service of God. His master did not, however, quite keep his promise, whereupon Massimiano wished to leave his service, and spoke to the Saint about it. Philip advised him to be patient, telling him expressly that if he ran away from one cross, he would only find a greater one. And so it was; for Massimiano, following the unwise counsel of others, left his place, and from that time forward was never at rest and never found a permanent home, although in other respects he led a good and praiseworthy life.

Philip required this virtue above all in the members of the Congregation. He did not readily give them permission to leave Rome for any long time, especially for the purpose of going to their own country; for he said, "Devotion is relaxed and lost among relations; a man gains nothing, and when he returns he generally finds it hard to resume the usual exercises, and to go back to his former life."

There was a youth of most excellent qualities, who entered the Congregation, and gave great hopes of succeeding admirably. It happened that he fell into some bodily indisposition, for which change of air was recom-

mended. The holy father did not relish this, but the youth being importunate about it, especially as he wished to go in company with another member of the Congregation who had some necessary occasion to leave Rome, the Saint humbly yielded to his importunity and gave him leave. But he said to some of the fathers, "There are two going away, but only one will come back;" and so it proved, for the youth went to his native place, and overcome by the love of home returned no more. Philip however wrote him a letter of which an extract shall be given, that the Saint's desire may be better seen in his own words; "It was my wish that Germanico should go later, and that you should not remain there long amid flesh and blood, and the love of mother and brothers, for I had no doubt what the consequence would be, having before my eyes the example of Saints Marcus and Marcellianus, who, having been bold through so many martyrdoms, were at last on the point of denying Christ through love of father and mother and children, and would have done so if St. Sebastian had not strengthened them with his holy words;" and at the end he adds, "Now then it is for you to decide whether you will stay or come back, for we do not want pressed men here."

Father Giovanni Antonio Lucci, who has already been mentioned, left Rome to go to Bagnarea his native place. The Saint tried to detain him saying, "Giovanni Antonio, do not go; I know what I am saying;" and he added, "*Puto ego quod Spiritum Dei habeam.*" Lucci went notwithstanding, fell in love with home, and never returned to the Congregation. The same thing happened to several others who went home against his

will ; some of them died whilst they were there, and others returned no more to the Congregation.

He was also reluctant to give his subjects leave to go and found Congregations in other cities ; he wished them to remain steadily in the Congregation of Rome, and attend to the best of their power to the discharge of their duties in it. How strong this feeling was in him may easily be gathered from a letter which he wrote to Sir Charles Borromeo, whom he tenderly loved and greatly revered. St. Charles had asked for some of his subjects, and Philip answered, "Some of them are as yet but unripe students, and I cannot see my way to taking them from their studies ; I think I should make a mistake in doing so ;" and a little further on he adds, "The ripe ones I cannot send you, for we are too much in want of them here ; and I fear and tremble when I have to make a choice even amongst them, of some one to send to any place, or put into any kind of charge ; and I recommend myself most earnestly to God," &c. From this we may see how averse he was to removing any of his subjects from the Congregation of Rome.



**BOOK III**

**WHICH TREATS OF THE GIFTS WHICH GOD  
VOUCHSAFED TO PHILIP**





## CHAPTER I

### PHILIP'S RAPTURES AND ECSTASIES

PHILIP'S great and solid virtues, which we have related in the preceding book, were crowned and adorned by the Divine Majesty with various gifts and graces. The Lord was not contented with having raised him to the height of charity we have described, and given him so great a spirit of prayer. It was His good pleasure to exalt him to a knowledge of the ineffable secrets of the Divine Greatness in wonderful ecstasies and raptures, which were of frequent occurrence during the whole of his life, although in his humility he strove to the utmost to avoid them.

In consequence of an important cause which was before the Pope,<sup>1</sup> the Dominican Fathers had the devotion of the Forty Hours at their convent of the Minerva, and Philip, together with Francesco Maria Tarugi and some others, was there by invitation. Whilst he was kneeling in one of the most out-of-the-way corners of the church praying fervently, he fell all at once into an ecstasy, and remained with his eyes fixed on the Blessed Sacrament, his face slightly smiling, and the rest of his body perfectly motionless. The prior, Fra Angelo Diacceti, afterwards Bishop of

<sup>1</sup> CARDINAL CAPECELATRO, *op. cit.* vol. i., 295 (English Translation), says "this cause" was the question of the condemnation of the writings of Savonarola.

Fiesole, who was a great friend of Philip, noticed it, and in company with another friar went up to him and called him several times; they then touched him and found him as cold as ice. Thinking that he was in some fit or swoon they carried him to a cell in the noviciate, where, after remaining a long time in that state, he returned to himself, and cried out, "Victory! victory! our prayer is heard." The prior in great astonishment, seeing that he had not been in any fit, begged him earnestly to explain the cause of the change that had come over him, and what victory it was of which he spoke. The Saint at first resisted all attempts to obtain any explanation; but at last, prevailed upon by the prior's reiterated entreaties, he said, "Well, the business for which we have had this devotion has ended happily, and we have been heard." When he was questioned more narrowly about his ecstasy, he said that he had seen Jesus Christ in the consecrated Host, giving benediction with His most holy Hand to all those who were present at the devotion; and that they ought therefore to thank God for the victory they had gained. It was afterwards found that at the very moment when the Saint returned to himself, the Pope had given sentence in favour of the Dominicans in the cause for which they had had the devotion of the Forty Hours.

Fabrizio de' Massimi, going one morning to confession to him, found the door of his room closed, and opening it very softly he saw the Saint in the act of praying, standing up with his eyes raised to heaven and his hands uplifted, making many gestures. He stood for awhile watching him, and then went close

to him and saluted him. The Saint, although he had his face towards Fabrizio so that he could easily see him, and indeed could not naturally have helped doing so, neither saw him nor returned him any answer. Fabrizio, struck with this, remained looking at him, feeling great devotion from simply beholding him in this state of abstraction, which lasted about eight minutes longer. Philip then came to himself, and perceiving that Fabrizio was present asked him how he had got in; he replied that he had not found the door bolted; whereupon, without another word, the Saint heard his confession. Francesco della Molara also on going one morning to confession to him found the door open, and the Saint sitting down praying. Francesco knelt down before him to maké his confession, when he perceived that the servant of God was in an ecstasy, and it was a quarter of an hour before he came to himself.

Another time he was in the chapel of the Visitation, where he was fond of going because he particularly liked Baroccio's picture which is there; and sitting down according to his custom upon a little seat, he passed unawares into a most sweet ecstasy. Some women, his penitents, who were at no great distance, seeing this, went up to him, and after having looked at him for a while called him and shook him so vehemently that he came to himself. Philip, who could not bear to be observed when enjoying these divine favours, got up and began to cry out and call Father Antonio to send these women away, because they were annoying him and would not let him alone; and he pretended to be in a violent passion; but all this was merely an artifice to destroy the good opinion

they might have formed of him from finding him in an ecstasy.

Paolo Ricuperati, a prelate of both the Segnature and one of the holy father's familiar friends, went one evening to confession to him at S. Girolamo, and found him at supper with Messer Giovanni Animuccia. Philip rose from table and heard his confession, but as he was in the act of putting his hands on his head to give him absolution, he went into an ecstasy and became motionless. He remained in this state for a considerable time, to the astonishment of the prelate and Animuccia, both of whom witnessed it. At last he came to himself and gave him absolution; the like happened to others of his penitents, many of whom found him in ecstasy when they went to confession.

About the year 1585, Father Antonio Gallonio found Philip in bed one morning apparently almost dead. The medical men were immediately summoned, and thinking it was gout, applied a hot iron to his head, blisters to his arms, and other remedies to his shoulders. Nothing however seemed to have any effect, and F. Giovan Francesco Bordino gave him Extreme Unction; after which he immediately came to himself, and opening his eyes looked on all the fathers who stood around him weeping; but when one of them said, "Father, you have been very ill," he answered, "Nay, I have had no other illness than the one you have provided me with." They found afterwards that it was no fit, but an ecstasy; and it was perhaps because of these frequent ecstasies that he used often to say in bidding them good night after he was in bed, "Go away, and if you find me dead to-morrow morning, bury me." At mass his ecstasies were frequent, as we

learn from those who served him, and especially from Cardinal Ottavio Paravicini, who when young served the Saint's mass for twenty years, though not continuously. When Philip was in the presence of the Pope, he found it so difficult to prevent himself going into an ecstasy, because of the interior movements which it caused in his heart, that whenever he was going to see his Holiness he used to say to the fathers, "Now pray for me, that I may not commit some foolery or other."

He was often seen with his whole body raised in the air; among others Paolo Sfondrato,<sup>1</sup> Cardinal of S. Cecilia, saw him in prayer raised several spans from the ground, indeed almost to the ceiling, as he told Paul V. a little before his death. Giovanni Battista Modio was on one occasion so grievously ill that his death was hourly expected, and he had already lost his speech and senses. At this juncture the holy father came to visit him, and after staying a little while with him, being on familiar terms in Modio's house, retired into a solitary room to pray for him. When midnight was passed, some of those who were attending the sick man began to wonder where Philip had retired, and on looking, found him with his body raised entirely up into the air and surrounded with rays of glory. Seeing him thus, they cried out, "Come here quickly; come here quickly;" on which all who were with the sick man ran to the spot, and saw him raised from the ground to such a height that his head almost touched the ceiling, whilst a

<sup>1</sup> Paolo Sfondrato, nephew of Gregory XIV. who created him Cardinal in 1590, distinguished for extraordinary works of piety, died 1618, and left all his fortune to his titular Church of St. Cecilia.

bright light shone all around him. In about half-an-hour Philip came to himself and went to the invalid in great joy, and laying his hand on his head said to him, "Be of good heart, you will not die;" at that instant the power of speech returned to the sick man, so that he began to converse with the Saint as distinctly as if he had not been ill at all, and in a few days he entirely recovered.

Father Gregorio Ozes, the Dominican, declared that before he entered religion he also saw Philip raised in the air and with a resplendent light around him; and F. Francesco Maria Tarugi, that he had beheld him raised a palm above his bed, when the Saint was praying once for Tarugi's deliverance from a temptation of sloth, which immediately left him. These occurrences were not confined to private places, or witnessed only by a few; even in churches and public places the Saint was carried away against his will into ecstasies. On one occasion he was praying in St. Peter's at the tombs of the Apostles, when his whole body was seen to rise suddenly into the air, with his clothes gathered up as they had been when he was kneeling, and then to descend with equal suddenness; after which, fearing that he might have been observed, he fled away with the utmost rapidity. The same thing happened in many other churches, so that when he entered a church in company with others, he used to stay a very little time, only saying a Pater and Ave and then rising from his knees, to prevent the possibility of his going into an ecstasy.

He was repeatedly seen raised into the air when he was saying mass. At Torre di Specchi some of the nuns saw him three or four palms above the

ground during mass. A little girl who was at his mass at S. Girolamo saw him about two palms from the ground, and turning to her mother said with childish simplicity, "Mother, I think that father must be possessed; see how he stays in the air!" but the mother replied: "Hold your tongue, it is a Saint in an ecstasy." One of his penitents named Sulpizia Sirleti, seeing him raised into the air on one occasion, said to herself, "Surely this father is possessed, or he would never stay in the air in this way." Going afterwards to confession to him, she was ashamed to mention her suspicion to the Saint, and began, "Father, I have said,"—and then stopped, not having courage to finish her sentence. But Philip said to her, "Go on, you silly creature; you have been finding fault with me, have you not?" She said she had, and he asked her further what it was she had said. Sulpizia answered, "The other morning, when your Reverence was saying mass and was raised above the ground,"—Philip hearing this much put his finger on his mouth and said, "Hush, hush;" but she added, "Then I said in my heart, O dear, this father must be possessed!" At these words Philip began to laugh, and repeated several times interruptedly, in his usual way, "True, true, I am possessed."

Sometimes when he was saying mass he was seen with rays of glory round his head. In the first year of the pontificate of Sixtus V., Aurelio Bacci, a Sienese, was assisting at Philip's mass at the high altar of our church, and just as he began the Memento of the living saw him with a glory round his head, of the colour of gold but more gleaming, about four fingers wide all round and in the shape of a diadem. Aurelio,



thinking it might be perhaps some defect in his sight, turned his eyes away several times in order to change the impression and then looked again, but still saw the same thing distinctly. He rubbed his eyes with his hand and his pocket handkerchief, and then looked at the heads of other people present without seeing anything of the kind, but when he looked again at Philip, he saw the glory as plain as before, and it lasted until the holy father had communicated.

Several times when he was saying mass at S. Girolamo, a little girl about twelve years old saw him raised in the air, and surrounded by a most white and resplendent cloud which encompassed his whole body, and although his vestments were red, or of some other colour, not white, yet he appeared all white and resplendent, and remained thus for half a quarter of an hour. Muzio Achillei, a priest of S. Severino and Philip's penitent, also saw the Saint's face shining during his mass like bright gold.

When Vincenzo Lanteri, Archbishop of Ragusa, was a little boy, Philip used to pull his hair and box his ears whenever he met him. One day Vincenzo, meeting him in the street and fearing lest he should do the same in public, determined to be beforehand with him, and going up to him took his hand and kissed it reverently, when he perceived it all of the colour of gold and shining with bright rays which issued from its centre. Wondering whether this could come from any natural cause he looked about him, and saw that the air was thick and no sunshine was to be seen anywhere. Full of wonder and perplexity, he went immediately to Chiesa Nuova, and related the occurrence to Father Tommaso Bozio, who confirmed him in his

belief that it was supernatural and told him that many had seen Philip's hand with the same appearance. A great number of similar facts might be added, but they resemble each other so closely that we shall not weary the reader by relating them.

## CHAPTER II

### PHILIP'S VISIONS

PHILIP was also favoured with many visions, revelations and apparitions; indeed they happened to him almost every night. His humility concealed them as far as possible, nevertheless we shall relate some of the most striking which on different occasions he made known to one or another of his spiritual children, that the reader may see how this glorious Saint, whose mind and heart were continually in heaven, was favoured by God with heavenly visits and unearthly consolations.

On one occasion before he was ordained priest, or had come to a determination as to his state of life, he was praying with particular fervour that he might know the will of God about it. It was in the morning just at sunrise, and as he was praying the glorious precursor of Christ St. John the Baptist appeared to him. He was so filled with devotion at this apparition that the usual trembling came over him, and after he had remained in rapture for some time the vision disappeared, leaving in his heart a great spiritual fervour and burning love; and from some circumstances in the apparition, he told Cardinal Frederick Borromeo that he gathered it to be the will of God that he should live in Rome for the good of his neighbour in poverty, and in special detachment from everything. The same thing was signified to him in

another vision which he had of two of the blessed whilst he was at prayer. One of them had a hard roll in his hand, which he appeared to be eating without any other food. Philip seeing this and wishing to know the meaning of it, heard these words, "God wishes that you should live in the midst of Rome as if you were in a desert, abstaining from eating flesh, so far as may be allowable for you." This he observed perseveringly to the day of his death, eating meat very seldom, and then only out of condescension to others or on account of illness; though in his humility he used to assign as a reason for his abstinence that meat did not agree with him. These visions, in addition to what Father Agostino Ghattini of the Tre Fontane told him, as we have already related,<sup>1</sup> set Philip's mind completely at rest regarding his state of life, and filled him with an inward contentment and clearness of mind which never left him during the whole course of his life.

Another time, after he was a priest, he was praying on Christmas night with Costanzo Tassone and another of his penitents named Sebastiano the musician, whom we have spoken of before, when in the fervour of his prayer he saw Christ appear upon the altar in the form of a child. He turned to his companions, supposing that they also saw the vision, and said, "Do you not see the Infant Jesus upon the altar?" They answered "No," and perceiving that the favour was granted to him only, he said no more, and went on with his prayer. Once also when he was saying mass, Cesare Tommasi of Ripa Transona, his penitent, observed that at the elevation, after he had laid the Host down, he remained a long time as if in ecstasy before the

<sup>1</sup> See *supra*, p. 57.

elevation of the chalice, and that after mass he returned to the sacristy with a joyous and smiling countenance. Cesare afterwards asked him why he had been so long at the elevation, and why he had come back to the sacristy so joyous; the Saint laid his hand on Cesare's head and smiled, but gave him no answer; but his penitent growing importunate and asking him over and over again, Philip at last reluctantly told him that sometimes at mass after the consecration, God was pleased to show him the glory of paradise in a vision; but he begged him not to tell this to any one else.

He also had the consolation of seeing the souls of many, and particularly of his friends and penitents, go up to heaven. Mario Tosini, one of the first members of the company of the Santissima Trinità, a man of singular goodness, whose life has been written by Bonsignor Cacciaguerra, appeared to Philip immediately after his death, about midnight, full of joy. He called twice with a loud voice, "Philip, Philip," and the Saint, lifting up his eyes to heaven, saw the soul of Mario all bright and resplendent enter into paradise. The following morning he heard the news of his death, and found upon inquiry that he had expired at the very time the vision appeared. The Saint himself related this to some of his spiritual children, when speaking to them of the goodness of that servant of God, and added that human language could never express the beauty of a justified soul.

Vincenzo Miniatore, another of the first brothers of the Santissima Trinità, also a penitent of the holy father, and a man of great perfection, appeared to him immediately after his death all glorious, and Philip saw him ascend to heaven surrounded with splendour.

In the morning he went to console his widow, and said to her, "Your husband knocked at my door during the night, and recommended you and all your family to my care; fear not, but be assured that he is gone to paradise;" and from that time the holy father always assisted the family in its necessities, as has been mentioned elsewhere.

Marco Antonio Corteselli, of Como, cashier of the bank of the Cevoli, one of his dearest spiritual children, a man much given to prayer and works of mercy, and who for many years had transacted the business of the Capuchins for them, passed to a better life; the Saint went with Father Antonio Gallonio and another priest to see his body, which was in the church of Santa Caterina, close to S. Girolamo della Carità. After looking at him for some time with great attention, he made a painter take a portrait of him; on the priest expressing wonder at this, Gallonio told him he need not be surprised, for that Philip had said, "The soul of Corteselli appeared to me last night all luminous, and remained conversing with me for about two hours, and was then borne up to heaven by the angels," and had added that the room remained filled with brightness from his presence. Corteselli on the other hand had such an opinion of Philip, that one day, talking with Paolo Maggi, a priest and procurator of the Sacred Penitentiary, he said in the spirit of prophecy, "Messer Paolo, this good father is not known and some think him an ordinary man; but he will be well known when he is dead."

Fabrizio de' Massimi had a daughter about thirteen years old, named Elena. This child was most fervent in the love of Christ, and most obedient to her

director in the least particular; she wept bitterly over our Lord's Passion, communicated at least three times a week and that with abundance of tears, and relished prayer as most men relish the food which is their bodily nourishment. She had a lowly opinion of herself, preferring every one to herself, and had an extreme desire to suffer, that she might in some measure correspond with our Lord's Passion. In her last illness when Baronius took her the Holy Communion, after she had communicated she beheld Jesus Christ shedding His Precious Blood into her soul; and at last, having been favoured with a foresight of her death, she passed away to heaven with signs of the greatest devotion. No sooner had she breathed her last than Philip heard the angels singing, and saw them, as he himself told Baronius, carrying the little virgin's soul to paradise as they sang. He heard this singing of the angels on different other occasions, and Baronius says the Saint called it a "Hebrew song."

In fact those who were most intimate with Philip held it as certain that none of his spiritual children died without his receiving a knowledge of the state of their souls. Similar apparitions to those already mentioned happened at the deaths of Lavinia de' Rustici, the first wife of Fabrizio de' Massimi, of Sister Elena and Sister Scholastica, her daughters, who were both at Torre di Specchi, of Patrizio Patrizi, and of Virgilio Crescenzi. In consoling the sons of the last named he said, "Do not make yourselves unhappy; your father is in paradise, and I tell you that I know it," and he repeated these words several times over. Many other instances of a like nature might be mentioned. Cardinal Frederick Borromeo says that Philip spoke to

him of it as an ordinary and common thing with him; and often when speaking of the beauty of souls, he would say, as one who was familiar with such visions, "Words cannot express the beauty of a soul which dies in the grace of God." So well known was it that God had given him this gift of knowing the condition of departed souls, especially of those of his own penitents, that F. Giovanni Antonio Lucci, when his mother died, begged the Saint to pray that he might know the state of her soul; and Philip after doing so said, "Be of good cheer; your mother is in heaven," on hearing which Giovanni wept for joy. Philip told him the same of his father when he died, and added as his reason, "Because the same thing has happened as in the case of my own father's death;" whence we may gather that Philip's father had gone to heaven, which we may well believe to be owing to the prayers and merits of such a son.

We have several times already had occasion to mention Giovanni Animuccia, one of the Saint's spiritual children, an eminent musician and Maestro di Cappella of St. Peter's. He used to go every day to the Oratory to sing after the sermons, taking several other singers with him. He was a man of such purity, that after he had put himself under Philip's direction, he lived with his wife as though she were his sister. During his life he was extremely harassed by scruples; but in his last sickness it pleased God to free him from them entirely, so that he died in the greatest peace and joyfulness. One evening nearly three years after his death, about an hour before the Ave, when the sermons were over, he appeared to a certain Alfonso, a Portuguese, who had been a friend of his, and asked him if



the Oratory was over. His friend replied that it was, forgetting at the moment that Animuccia was dead. Animuccia thereupon added, "Will you have the kindness to beg Father Philip to pray to God for me?" The Portuguese then began to reflect, and remembering that his friend had been dead a good while, immediately returned to the place where he had seen him, but the apparition had disappeared: whereupon he went to the Saint in great fear, and told him what had happened. The next morning Philip made him relate the whole vision in the Oratory, in the presence of all, and then sent to different churches to have mass said for the soul of the deceased, besides having a solemn Requiem sung at S. Giovanni de' Fiorentini; after which he said to the brothers of the Oratory, "Animuccia has arrived," meaning that he had passed from purgatory to paradise.

Philip was allowed, moreover, to see the beauty of souls, even while they were united to the body. Speaking of St. Ignatius, the founder of the Society of Jesus, he said that the interior beauty of that holy man was so great that he could discern it in his countenance, and he declared that he had several times seen rays of glory issue from his face and from his eyes. So high was the opinion which Philip had of him, that after his death, in case of any special need, he used to go to his tomb and recommend himself to him, although he was not yet canonized, and obtained by this means whatever he asked; and after he had read his life, he often said, "How many more things are left out than are written! Oh if all had been recorded, how would men's admiration for Ignatius be increased."

Philip beheld the face of St. Charles so beautiful and resplendent that he declared it seemed to him as if he looked upon an angel. He saw also a great splendour in the countenance of one of his youthful penitents, named Giovanni Battista Saraceni of Collescepoli, who afterwards became a Dominican and was called Fra Pietro Martire; by his virtue and abilities he was raised to the chief offices of his order, of which he was at last elected Vicar-General, ending his edifying life by a most holy death. Philip also saw at different times some Carthusian monks with their faces shining as they came from prayer; and he was able to discern the interior beauty of souls which were in the state of grace.

Whilst Philip was favoured with so many visions for his consolation, he had also very frequent apparitions of the evil spirits for the exercise of his virtue and the instruction of others. When he was living at S. Girolamo, he ordered F. Giovanni Antonio Lucci to exorcise a possessed woman, and in contempt of the devil to give her several blows. The evil spirit was so enraged at this, that he appeared to Philip the next night in a most hideous form in order to frighten him, and when he went away, left such a stench in the room that the Saint smelt it for a long time afterwards. One day he was in the Oratory at S. Girolamo when, besides the brothers, Gabriello Paleotto,<sup>1</sup> who was afterwards Cardinal, was there. They were conversing of the things of God, when suddenly Philip rose and said, "My brothers, here is the devil; kneel down and

<sup>1</sup> Gabriello Paleotto, b. 1524, cr. Cardinal 1565, the first *Archbishop* of Bologna, the intimate friend of St. Charles and of Pope Sixtus V., died 1597 in the Pontificate of Clement VIII., who had been his pupil in the study of Canon Law.

pray." He himself immediately fell on his knees, and making the sign of the cross in the air said to the devil, "Thou shalt not enter;" whereupon the evil one disappeared instantly from the eyes of the Saint, and they pursued their exercises in peace.

Another time he was at the baths of Diocletian, close to Santa Maria degli Angeli, when he saw above one of the ancient monuments there, the devil in the form of a young man; and looking fixedly at him, he observed that he changed his countenance, appearing sometimes younger, sometimes older, sometimes ugly, and sometimes beautiful. Perceiving that the devil was doing this in order to delude him, he commanded him in the name of God to depart; upon which he immediately vanished, leaving, as in the last instance, a most horrible stench behind him. This stench was like sulphur, and although in general he alone smelt it, sometimes others perceived it as well; thus, one morning when he laid his hand on the head of a possessed person, such a pestilential smell was left upon his hand, that though he washed it with soap and different sweet-scented things, the stench lasted for three days, during which he gave his hand to several persons to smell, in order that they might take occasion from it to avoid sin more carefully. On other occasion when Philip was in our church, the devil appeared to him in the form of a boy of six or seven years of age, holding a handkerchief to his mouth and making game of him. The Saint, looking severely at him, drove him away; he then asked Gallonio who was there, if he had seen that boy; he answered that he had; on which the Saint added, "It was the devil who came into the church to do some evil."

So bitter was the devil's hatred to Philip, that whenever he prayed or performed any action at all of a religious nature, he almost always endeavoured to disturb or annoy him. One night when the Saint was praying, he appeared to him with a terrible aspect in order to frighten him, but on Philip's calling to his aid the Queen of heaven, the evil one instantly disappeared. Another time, when the Saint had retired to a sort of platform above his room, the demon, not being able to do him any other mischief, splashed his clothes all over with dirt; another time he tried to injure him by causing a plank to fall upon him; and when the Saint was ill, the devil used often to put out the light which was kept burning in the room. It was quite a common thing for him to make noises in the Saint's room; and Gallonio, who slept underneath, was frequently obliged to rise and go upstairs to see what the noise was, but never found anything. Many a time also Philip would say, "The devil tried to frighten me last night, but I recommended myself to the most holy Madonna, and she delivered me."

Philip had acquired, both by the sanctity of his life and from his long experience, great discernment in these matters, and knew well how to distinguish true from false visions. Whenever the conversation turned upon them, whether speculatively or practically, he used to quote, as a preservative from delusion, the common teaching of the holy fathers, that we ought not ordinarily to give credit to visions; and although he was himself favoured by God with such lights and elevations of mind, yet he never liked ecstasies or visions in public, and used to say that they were most dangerous things, and that we ought to seek for

spiritual sweetnesses and consolations in the hiddenness of our own room, and keep them as secret as possible. He also used to say that visions, both good and bad, will come even to those who do not wish for them, and therefore that no one must feel secure and say, "I do not desire these things, and so I shall not be exposed to delusions or to evil visions."

He used to add that it is a difficult thing to receive visions and not be puffed up by them, more difficult not to think ourselves worthy of them, but most difficult of all to think ourselves actually unworthy, and to prefer patience, obedience, and humility, to the sweetness of visions. He taught that visions which are not useful, either to the person who receives them or to the Church in general, are in no way to be esteemed; also that real visions begin by breeding horror and fear, but leave behind them great peace and tranquillity, whereas counterfeit visions produce just the contrary effect; and that great humility, resignation and detachment, are required, to avoid coming at last to leave God for visions. He warned confessors not to attach any importance to the revelations of their spiritual children, particularly of women; because they seem sometimes to be far advanced in spirituality, but more often than not it all melts away, and many have suffered shipwreck in following after such things. He therefore counselled, and in many instances commanded his spiritual children to reject them with all their might, and not to have the least fear of displeasing the Divine Majesty in doing so, because this is one of the very tests to distinguish true from false visions. One day, when he went up into the pulpit to preach, he spoke against those who give

credence to visions, raptures, and ecstasies, and added, "I know a person present here, who could go into an ecstasy if he pleased, God having granted him this amongst other graces, but such things ought to be shunned and hidden;" when he had said this, he felt himself being carried away in spirit: whereupon he strove to the utmost of his power to hinder himself from going into an ecstasy, and being unable to go on with his sermon, he struck his hand upon his knee and said, "He who wishes for ecstasies and visions, does not know what he desires; Oh if everybody did but know what an ecstasy is!" and then bursting into tears, he came down from the pulpit and went away.

Another time when F. Giovan Francesco Bordino had been discoursing upon ecstasies, after he had finished, Philip mounted the pulpit and said that as that father had spoken of ecstasies, he wished to add a word or two to the discourse; "I know," he continued, "a woman of holy life who had continual ecstasies for a long time, and then God took them from her: now I ask you,—when do you think I esteemed that woman most, when she had ecstasies, or when she had not? I tell you that to my mind she was without comparison more to be esteemed when she had not ecstasies than when she had;" and with these words he came down from the pulpit and went away. On one occasion he was told that a nun of the third order of St. Dominic had frequent visions of our Lord, and of St. Catherine of Siena. The Saint, who had had great experience in such matters, replied, "Women are easily deluded; tell her therefore, when such apparitions come, to spit in their face, and whoever they may be,

to make no account of them, taking care not only not to desire them, but to despise them." The religious acted upon this advice, and kept herself always in prudent fear of being deceived, with the greatest advantage to her soul.

We have already mentioned Francesco Maria, commonly surnamed Il Ferrarese, one of the Saint's first spiritual children. One night the devil appeared to him in the form of the Blessed Virgin, surrounded with glory. Next morning Francesco told Philip of it, but the Saint answered, "This is the devil, and not the Virgin; if he returns again spit in his face." The following night the vision returned; Francesco spat in his face, and the demon immediately disappeared. He then continued his prayer, and presently the most holy Virgin came to him in reality; he tried to spit at her, but the Madonna said, "Spit if you can," and he found his mouth and tongue so dry and parched that he could not. Our Blessed Lady told him that he had done well to perform the obedience which had been given him, and then disappeared, leaving him full of consolation and joy.

Antonio Fucci, the physician of whom we have spoken before, was attending a nun of holy life who was seriously ill, and finding her one day absorbed in divine contemplation, he waited until she came to herself, when turning immediately to him she said, "O how beautiful have I seen you just now in paradise!" Antonio, reflecting on these words, went and told them to the holy father, and on the same day fell ill. His indisposition continually increasing, the enemy of mankind, in order to delude him, came to visit him several times under the guise of a physician,

promising him a long life and telling him that he would certainly not die of that sickness. This also he mentioned to the Saint, who came to him every day; Philip told him that his visitor was not the physician, but the devil; and Antonio, thus made aware of the delusion, resigned himself to the will of God and died a holy death a few days afterwards. The Saint used to relate this incident in order to impress upon his children that those who are in danger of death ought not easily to give credit to visions, especially when they are accompanied with promises of long life; because they are generally delusions of the devil, who wishes us to die still hoping for life, and so without due preparation; and he used to say that there is less danger in rejecting true visions, than in putting faith in false ones.

Mattia Maffei, a priest and one of the Saint's penitents, having been miraculously cured by him of an illness, had a dream on the following night, which shall be related for the sake of the instruction it contains. It seemed to this good priest that he was conducted by the holy father into a spacious meadow, where there was an innumerable multitude of princes, richly and superbly clad; whilst he was looking, in one instant the whole scene sank down, everything turned into flames and fire, and an immense number of devils appeared. He remained standing on a very narrow edge of the meadow, from which one of the devils with some hooks tried all he could to pull him into the fire, and whilst he was defending himself, the Saint looked at him and smiled. At last he took him by the hand and said to him, "Come, Mattia, do not be afraid," and led him through the midst of a tangled thicket of



exceedingly sharp thorns, through which the Saint passed unhurt, whilst Maffei suffered greatly as he was dragged through them. The holy father then led him into another most beautiful meadow, at the end of which was a little hill, and at the foot of it three angels in shining garments, one bearing a cross in his hand, and the other two carrying candlesticks with lighted candles. Behind them followed an immense multitude of virgins, widows, and married women, many of whom made an obeisance to the holy father, and many asked Maffei if he wished to go with them; but as he did not dare to speak, the Saint answered for him, saying that it was not time yet, because he was not altogether a good man. All the multitude then passed through a wide avenue, bordered on either side with flowery trees on which were little angels, who kept breaking off branches covered with blossoms and throwing them down on the crowd below, singing all the while most sweetly, "*Gloria in excelsis Deo*," and the hymn, "*Jesu, corona Virginum*." At last, when the multitude reached the top of the hill, they entered into a most bright and beautiful palace; and when all had entered, Maffei awoke and the dream ended. He went immediately to confession to the Saint, and before he had spoken a word, Philip asked him if he believed in dreams; Maffei tried to lay hold of this opportunity to relate his dream, but the Saint with a severe and almost menacing look cut him short, and said, "Get away with you; he who wishes to go to paradise must be an honest man and a good Christian, and not a believer in dreams."

Lastly, he constantly repeated the maxim that we must catch by the feet those who wish to fly without

wings, and drag them down to the ground by main force, lest they should fall into the devil's net; meaning those who go after visions, dreams, and the like, and implying that we must always walk along the road of the mortification of our own passions, and of holy humility.

## CHAPTER III

### PHILIP'S GIFT OF PROPHECY—HE PREDICTS THE DEATH OF MANY PERSONS

To the gift of visions Philip joined that of prophecy; indeed he was distinguished even amongst other Saints in the extent to which he possessed this gift, as well in predicting future events as in seeing absent things, and reading the secrets of hearts. If all the instances which it would be easy to collect were related, they would fill entire volumes, as many of the witnesses declared in the processes; and the Congregation of Rites pronounced that in this gift of prophecy, "*Non est inventus similis illi*," "No one was found like him." It will be sufficient therefore to give a few instances, from which it may be gathered how singularly he was favoured by God in this respect; and we will begin with the predictions which he made of the deaths of others.

Costanzo Tassone, who has been mentioned before, was summoned from Milan to Rome by St. Pius V., and on his arrival went straight to S. Girolamo della Carità. One of Philip's penitents was at a window which looks into the piazza, and immediately ran to the Saint and said, "Father, here is Messer Costanzo." Philip thereupon ordered Ottavio Paravicini and Germanico Fedeli, who were both youths at the time, to stretch themselves like dead men over the threshold

of the door through which Costanzo had to pass. They obeyed, and Tassone, seeing the two youths stretched in this way on the ground, was a little disturbed, and begged them to let him pass. They remained however in the same position, till at last Philip bade them rise, and Costanzo ran to embrace him. In a short time he fell sick, and in a fortnight passed to a better life.

Giovan Angelo Crivelli went to confess to the Saint on Holy Thursday; he was perfectly well at the time, but Philip, looking earnestly into his face, said to him, "My Giovan Angelo, prepare yourself; go and pray a little while before the crucifix in the church of S. Girolamo, and then come back, for God wants something of you." Crivelli answered, "May His Divine Majesty do what seems best to Him; for I am ready to receive anything from His Hand." "But," rejoined the Saint, "if it were to please God to send you a very grievous tribulation, would you bear it willingly?" "Trusting in His aid," said he, "I would bear it most willingly." "Well then," replied Philip, "see that you are prepared, for at Easter God will call you." Giovan Angelo went away, and that same evening a fever came on, of which he died on the fourth day; and the Saint afterwards told his daughter that her father was gone to paradise.

One morning he suddenly called Francesco della Molara to him and said, "What would you do, Francesco, if your wife were to die?" "Indeed, Father," replied he, "I do not know." "Well now," said Philip, "think what you would do if your wife were to die." Fulvia de' Cavalieri, Francesco's wife, was at the time both young and well and with no

appearance of illness about her, but in ten days she was seized with a malignant fever, and died within the fortnight.

Girolamo Cordella, a physician of great reputation and a friend of the Saint, was appointed physician to the court, but continued, notwithstanding, to go about Rome visiting his patients; whereupon the Saint said, "This will last but a short time; he persists in returning to his old labours, and he will die." Soon after, Cordella's wife sent some one to the Saint to let him know that her husband was ill, and to beg his prayers. Father Gallonio went downstairs to see who it was that was asking for Philip, and what was wanted. Whilst he was gone the Saint began to say, "Poor Cordella! Ah! this time he will die without fail; his hour is come." Those who were present wondered at these words, for Father Gallonio had not yet returned with the news of his illness. But when he came back and delivered the message of Cordella's wife, the Saint again said, "O poor Cordella! the course of his life is finished; he will die presently." Those who were there said, "Well, Father, if we cannot help his body, we may at least help his soul." Philip replied in his usual manner, "Yes, that we can do certainly, that we can do." The eighth day of Cordella's illness came, and early in the morning, on Father Gallonio and Father Consolini taking a light to the Saint, he said, "Cordella died at such an hour, did he not?" but perceiving that they knew nothing about it, he immediately turned the conversation to something else. When the fathers sent to see how matters stood, they found that Cordella had died at the very hour that Philip had named; and Philip

himself said afterwards to Cardinal Agostino Cusano: "I was present at Girolamo Cordella's death, although I was in my own room all the while."

Orinzia, the wife of Pompeo Colonna, a lady of noble birth and eminent piety, constantly visited the hospital of S. Giacomo of the Incurables, in order to succour the poor patients in soul as well as in body. At last she fell ill, and was attended by the principal physicians of Rome, who, however, all said that her indisposition was not of any importance. But Orinzia, putting no confidence in the medical men, sent to ask Philip to visit her. He went, and conversed with her for a long time upon spiritual matters; before taking his leave, he dipped his finger in holy water, made the sign of the cross upon her, and urged her to call to mind the Passion of our Saviour. As he was going out of the palace he met the physicians, and when he said that the lady was very ill they ridiculed him. Then Philip replied, "Well, you may laugh at me now, but I tell you that on such a day (mentioning the day) she will pass to another world." At these words the physicians burst out laughing; but on the day mentioned Orinzia died.

Elena Cibi fell sick together with her husband Domenico Mazzei, and Tamiria Cevoli, Elena's mother, fearing from the symptoms of their complaint that both her daughter and her son-in-law would die, went to the Saint to recommend them to his prayers. "Father," she said, "I fear that both of them will die." "No, no," replied the Saint, "one is enough," and so it was, for Domenico died, and Elena got well, and leaving the cares of the world, became a nun in the convent of S. Vincenzo, at Prato in Tuscany.

Vittoria Cibi, Elena's sister, went to the Saint to make her confession; he asked her how long it was since she had visited another sister who was a nun at Torre di Specchi, called Sister Vincenza. Vittoria replied that it was a long time. "Well then," answered the Saint, "go and see her frequently, for she will die very shortly." Not long afterwards the nun, who was in perfect health and of a strong constitution, was suddenly attacked by a malignant fever, which carried her off in eighteen days.

Marcello Ferro wished to leave Rome with Cardinal Gambarra; but the holy father told him not to go, because his father, Alfonso Ferro, would die in a few days. Marcello obeyed, and although his father was strong and well, he died three weeks afterwards. Alessandro Crescenzi went to the Saint on the first of August, 1594, in excellent health; but Philip, as soon as he saw him, said, "Get ready, for in a short time you will die;" and on the sixteenth of the same month Alessandro expired. Guglielmo, the brother of Giovan Francesco Bucca, fell ill, and Philip said to Giovan Francesco, "Your brother will die, but do not grieve about it, for it is well for him that he should die now;" and his death took place accordingly. A cleric of the Congregation named Leonardo, of exemplary life, was ill, and the Saint was asked to pray for him, that he might not die. But Philip, having withdrawn for a while, returned and told Antonio Gallonio that he would rather not make that prayer, probably because he knew that it would be better for the sick man to die than to recover, and Leonardo died.

Virgilio Crescenzi fell ill, and as his indisposition

was at first very slight, his family never dreamed of his dying. The Saint however went to visit him, and told Costanza his wife that she must acquiesce in what was pleasing to God. On hearing this she was very much disturbed; but knowing the favours which God daily granted through Philip to those who recommended themselves to his prayers, she drew him aside, and with many tears knelt down before him, and earnestly besought him to intercede with God for the health of her husband. But he answered, "God wishes for him; do you desire anything but the salvation of his soul?" Both mother and children, however, joined in entreating him to pray for Virgilio's life, and then he said plainly to them that it was well for his soul that he should die then. When he was on the point of expiring, the Saint repeated to Giacomo his son, "I know why God calls your father now, and after his death I will tell you;" and he did so. In fact after Crescenzi's death Philip several times told Marcello Vitelleschi that when he really wished to pray for the dying man's recovery, he found himself unable to pray, and seemed to hear an interior voice telling him that it was necessary for Virgilio's good that he should die then.

When Patrizio Patrizi was attacked by his last illness, his indisposition seemed so slight that he said he would get up the next morning, and the doctors declared he had no fever. Philip, however, ordered him to receive the holy Viaticum as soon as possible, to make his will, and to prepare for death. Patrizio's wife, seeing the Saint in such a hurry, exclaimed, "This old man seems out of his mind;" Patrizio himself said, "In this matter the Father seems to me to



be a little precipitate;" and yet when he had made his will and received the last sacraments he died. He was a great servant of God, and the Saint put the greatest possible confidence in him, and after his death recommended himself to his prayers.

Fra Desiderio Consalvi, a Dominican, was dangerously ill of a pestilential fever, accompanied by delirium; the medical men despaired of him, and he was at the point of death. Another religious, Fra Francesco Bencini, was ill in the same convent, but not so seriously as Consalvi. Philip went to see both of them; he visited Fra Francesco first, and said, "This one will die." He then went to Fra Desiderio, and he had scarcely entered his cell before the invalid came to himself, and on the Saint's laying his hands on his head, the delirium left him instantly, and Philip said, "Be of good cheer, you will get well." At these words the sick man felt his heart filled with joy, secretly believing that God was going to restore him to health through the means of His servant Philip; nay, he seemed to be already cured, and answered, "I trust in you, Father; pray for me and for my welfare." When Philip bade him good-bye he said to him a second time, "Keep up your heart; you will recover without doubt." And so it was; for contrary to the opinion of all, he recovered and Fra Francesco died; so that the friars, when they saw Fra Desiderio restored to health, called him the "Risen Lazarus;" and Giovanni Comparotti, a medical man of the order, used to call this cure "the miracle of miracles." It happened on the 22nd of July, 1591.

Finally, he predicted the death of St. Charles Borromeo. Ceccolino Margarucci, a priest of S. Severino

and protonotary apostolic, who had been sent by the holy father to the service of St. Charles, having asked leave to stay three or four months at home in order to settle some affairs of his own, and desiring the holy Cardinal to grant him a favour before his return to Milan, wrote to Philip to beg him to obtain this favour for him from the Cardinal. Philip replied that it was useless to do anything about the matter, because, by the time he thought of returning to Milan, something would have happened which would prevent his going back to the Cardinal's service. Margarucci could not at the time understand what Philip meant; but the mystery was cleared up when he received the news of St. Charles' death, just as he was getting ready to return to Milan. He had written his letter to the holy father a month before the Cardinal's death, when there was no sign of illness about him. When Margarucci returned to Rome some months afterwards, Philip said, directly he saw him, "Did I not tell you something would happen which would prevent you from returning to the service of Cardinal Borromeo?"

## CHAPTER IV

### PHILIP PREDICTS THE RECOVERY OF MANY

THE reader must not imagine that Philip was only the messenger of death. There were many instances in which he predicted the recovery of those who seemed at the point of death. Cardinal Francesco Sforza<sup>1</sup> was ill of a pestilential fever and dysentery, and for twenty-two days the malady had afflicted him with loss of appetite and cruel paroxysms, so that he had made his confession and received the holy Viaticum, but not Extreme Unction. Whilst he was in this state, Caterina Sforza, his mother, sent to make an offering of a candle to Philip, and to beg him to pray for the recovery of her son the Cardinal. Philip waited for a little while, and then sent word to her not to be cast down, because her son would certainly not die; and the Cardinal recovered. The same thing happened to Michele Mercati, of S. Miniato, a famous physician and one of Philip's most intimate friends. When he was lying at death's door, Philip constantly said to his father Pietro Mercati, who was also a physician, "Do not be alarmed; your son will not die." At last Pietro said to him one day, "Father! we may almost count the minutes now;" Philip answered,

<sup>1</sup> Cardinal Sforza in his early life was a soldier and fought in Flanders under the celebrated Alessandro Farnese; he afterwards entered the ecclesiastical state and was cr. Cardinal in 1583, d. 1624.

“Have I not told you that he will not die? The Lord does not want him yet; He chooses to reserve him for another time.” Michele survived this eleven years, became physician to Clement VIII., and was made a prelate by him, and then Philip predicted his death, as he had before predicted his recovery. He sent several times to tell him not to study so hard, for that if he continued to do so he would die very shortly. Michele gave no heed to the warning, but a month and a half after he had finished a book which he was composing, he died; and when the holy father heard of it, he only said, “Yes, he would study too much.”

Giovan Battista Altoviti was so ill that the physicians considered him as good as dead, but the Saint, having prayed for him, said to F. Francesco Maria Tarugi, “Go and tell Giovan Battista from me, that he will not only not die, but that he will begin to recover to-morrow, and will get well;” all which was verified.

Bartolomeo Dotti, a Modenese, fell ill in Rome of fever; he made his will, and those who were about him, expecting his death, watched with him through the night. He had an Equerry's place in view, and in consequence of this, his nephew begged the Saint to pray for his uncle, because if he died the place would be lost, which would be a great injury to his family, particularly as his uncle had told him several times that he would resign the office in his favour. Philip answered, “Go, he will get well this time; but the first illness he has after this, he will die most certainly; but as to his resigning the place in your favour, I tell you he will do nothing of the kind.” Dotti got well,

but did not resign his place, and four years afterwards he died of the first illness which he had after the Saint's prediction.

Olimpia del Nero, wife of Marco Antonio Vitelleschi, was taken dangerously ill; three fevers came one after another, and there was every symptom of inevitable death. Girolamo Cordella, who attended her, told her husband that during his whole practice he had had but three patients with the same symptoms, and that all three had died. Philip, however, told Marco Antonio and others not to be afraid, because he felt compassion for that family, for whom Olimpia's death would be so heavy a loss, and that he would pray to God for her with the greatest earnestness, and he added, "This is a case in which we must needs do violence to God and pray absolutely for her, because she has so many children." The invalid began to amend as soon as the Saint had gone, and got well in a few days, contrary to the opinion of the medical men.

Cardinal Girolamo Panfilio, before he was promoted to the Cardinalate, and whilst he was auditor of the Rota, fell sick, and every one judged his disease to be mortal. When the malady was at its worst, Philip, who went to visit him twice a day, moved by the Spirit of God, took the sufferer by the head, and held it tightly with both his hands. Meanwhile, all trembling and agitated in his usual way, he prayed for him, and when he had finished his prayer said, "Be of good cheer, and do not be afraid, you will not die this time; in a few days you will be free from your complaint." Panfilio began to amend immediately, and in a short time was completely well. The same Cardinal testifies, that this happened also to his nephew Alessandro.

The physicians had already given him over when Philip came to visit him. He simply touched him with some relics, prayed for him, and then said that his illness would be of no consequence. The youth's complaint took a favourable turn immediately, and he recovered, to the surprise of the medical attendants.

Faustina Cenci, the wife of Carlo Gabrielli, was at the point of death. The holy father went to visit her, laid his hand upon her head, and said, "Do not fear, you will not die." He then prayed for a while, and she said, "Father! I am dead;" Philip replied, "No, keep up your spirits; I assure you that you will not die this time;" nor was it a vain assurance, for in a short time she recovered perfectly. Costanza del Drago was also at the point of death when the Saint went to visit her. He said to her, "Do not be afraid, you will soon come to confession at S. Girolamo;" and so it was, for from this time she became one of the Saint's penitents, and confessed to him as long as she lived. Another time, when Costanza was eight months advanced in pregnancy, she was attacked by scarlet fever. One night she became very much worse, lost her speech, and had scarcely any pulse, so that she received the holy Viaticum, and the priest remained in readiness to give her Extreme Unction. At daybreak Philip came to visit her, and she related to him the crisis she had had during the night, and the danger she was in. The Saint laid his hand on her head and answered, "I have been with you all the night; do not fear, for you are not going to die at present." From that moment the improvement gained ground, and in a short time, contrary to the universal opinion, she recovered.

The same thing happened to the wife of Giovan Francesco Bucca, a Roman. She was at the very point of death; and the brothers of the company of S. Giovanni de' Fiorentini had already received notice to be ready to accompany her to the grave. Philip, however, went to visit her, and touching her with some relics, prayed for her, and then said to her husband, "Your wife will certainly not die;" and to the amazement of all who had witnessed her hopeless state, she rallied and recovered perfectly.

Giovanni Antonio Lucci, when upwards of sixty years old, fell from his horse as he was coming to Rome. He received a contusion on the head, and dislocated his shoulder, and he was so much injured, that every one looked upon his death as certain. In consequence of this accident a fever came on, and the physicians pronouncing him in danger, Giovanni Antonio sent for the holy father to hear his confession. When Philip came, Lucci begged him to pray for his recovery, not that he was afraid of death, but because he had not settled his affairs as he should wish to do. Philip embraced him and said, "Do not fear, you will settle your affairs as you wish, and you will have time to make your will at your leisure." From that moment he began to amend, and in a short time perfectly recovered, and survived the Saint some months. Philip gave the same assurance to Giovan Francesco Bernardi, a father of the Congregation, who had already received Extreme Unction, and yet recovered, to the surprise of everybody. The Saint afterwards said to him, "My Giovan Francesco, I prayed for you in that dangerous illness, that God would be pleased to heal you, if it was for your good." To Agnesina Colonna, a lady as

illustrious for her piety as for her birth, and who was then given over by her medical attendants, he said, "Do not be afraid; you will not die this time," and she recovered. Another time, when Giovan Battista Crivelli was ill of a fever, and was just expecting the usual access, Philip visited him, and said, "Do not fear; the fever will not come again;" and so it proved. A priest, one of the Saint's spiritual children, had a rupture which inconvenienced him greatly and could find no relief from any of the remedies which were applied. He had recourse, however, to the prayers of Philip, who instantly answered, "Do not be afraid; you will be cured of it;" and in a few days it went away of itself, and nothing but a slight mark remained.

In a word, the sick whose recovery Philip predicted got well, even though given up by the physicians and at the point of death; whilst those whose death he predicted died, even when the physicians had no suspicion of it, and treated their malady as of no importance. Monte Zazzara declares that he had on several occasions two or three sick persons in his house at a time, with malignant fevers and other pestilential disorders, and that when he told the Saint, as he always used to do, if Philip said, "Do not be afraid; they will not die," they always got well; but if he said the contrary, they were sure to die.



## CHAPTER V

### OTHER PREDICTIONS OF PHILIP

PHILIP made many other predictions of various kinds. Sulpizia Sirleti, the wife of Pietro Focile, whom we have already mentioned, had a daughter four years old who was dangerously ill. She sent for the holy father, who was her confessor, and begged him with many tears to heal her child. The Saint replied, "Be calm; God wishes for her, let it be enough for you to have nursed her for Him." But seeing that she hesitated and did not quite resign herself as she ought to have done, Philip added, "Well, you will have a son, who will give you such trouble that it will be ill for you." At the end of about two years and a half, she had a son, who did nothing his whole life long but give continual displeasure to his father and mother. Elena Cibi, the wife of Domenico Mazzei, being in the pains of child-birth, sent for the holy father to hear her confession. Having done this, she begged of him to hold at the font the child that was about to be born, or at least to find some one else to do so, whichever he preferred; Philip answered, "There will be no need of a godfather;" and the night following Elena was confined of a dead child.

There was a lay brother in the Congregation, named Pietro Paolo de Petris. It happened that his father, who was a poor man, won five or six thousand crowns

in certain wagers which were common at the time. In consequence of this, he was very anxious that his son should leave the Congregation, and study for the priesthood, in order that he might assist in raising the family. Pietro Paolo, in order to get rid of his father's importunities, determined by the advice of the fathers to go to Naples. When he went to Philip for his blessing, the Saint said, "Well! go, since the fathers are of that opinion." But in the evening when he was going to bed, he gave orders to another lay brother, the next morning when Pietro Paolo was to start on his journey, not to let him go. Pietro Paolo was greatly astonished, but immediately went back to the Saint with ready obedience, when Philip said to him, "I do not wish you to go; but do not be afraid, God will take care of you." Three months afterwards, Pietro's father lost all his money at play, and consequently gave his son no further trouble.

Olimpia del Nero, wife of Marco Antonio Vitelleschi, had seven daughters, and was extremely desirous of having a son. Having great faith in the holy father, she went to him and said, "Father, I have seven daughters." Philip replied, "Well, do not be afraid; you will have no more girls." She had after this three boys in succession, and then thinking her family was becoming too large, she went again to the Saint and said, "Father, three sons!" Philip answered, "Go away with you! you will have no more, either boys or girls," and the prediction was fulfilled.

The Saint one day entered the convent of Torre di Specchi, and as he was going with four of the good mothers to one of their churches, which is now called the Chiesa Vecchia, he said to Porzia Capozucchi, who

was one of them, "Porzia, give yourself to prayer;" she replied, "I cannot, Father, because I am in office, and I have always active work to do." Another of them, Maria Maddalena Anguillara, said, "And what of me, Father? I do not give myself up to prayer, and yet I have nothing to do." The Saint answered in his usual way, as if joking, "Yes, yes! you do nothing, and you shall be Presidente; so give yourself to prayer now, for you will not be able to do so when you are superioress." The others, on hearing this, began to laugh, for Maria Maddalena was then only about twenty or twenty-one; the Saint said, "Laugh away, laugh away, and yet you will say afterwards, 'Philip said it.'" When he saw that Maria Maddalena herself was laughing, he said to her, "You laugh, do you? remember, Philip has told you." A number of superioresses died one after the other, and at last, after the canonization of the Saint, Girolama Taschi was elected; but in the year 1635 she became perfectly blind, and being no longer able to attend to her duties resigned her office, and at the new election the mothers chose Maria Maddalena Anguillara as Presidente. They then remembered Philip's prophecy, which was thus fulfilled forty years after he had made it, contrary to all expectation, inasmuch as Girolama Taschi was young, and likely to live a long time.

The Constable Marco Antonio Colonna,<sup>1</sup> and Felice Orsina, his wife, were distressed that their son Fabrizio had no heirs. Anna Borromeo, the sister of St. Charles and Fabrizio's wife, who was a penitent of the

<sup>1</sup> Marco Antonio Colonna commanded with Don John of Austria at the famous naval victory of Lepanto against the Turks, 1571; afterwards Viceroy of Sicily, d. 1584. His wife, Felice Orsina Peretti Damasceni, was great-niece of Sixtus V.

Saint, was on this account particularly anxious to have a son, and recommended herself to Philip's prayers, that he might obtain this favour for her from God. One morning Philip said to her quite suddenly, "Anna, you may rejoice, for before very long you will have two sons." A year afterwards she had a son, who was named Marco Antonio, and the year following another, named Filippo, born after the Constable's death; and she used to say, "I consider myself to have obtained these two sons through the intercession of Father Philip," and called them from this circumstance his children.

Tommaso Minerbetti and Pier Antonio Morelli went to S. Girolamo, by the advice of F. Francesco Benci of the Society of Jesus, to hear Philip's opinion about a resolution to which they had come. Pier Antonio told him he wished to become a Benedictine monk, and Tommaso said his desire was to be a priest, and that they wished for the Saint's advice. Philip rose from his chair, and with a cheerful countenance touched Pier Antonio with a stick which he had in his hand, saying to him, "You will not be a monk," and to Tommaso, "You will not be a priest." And so it turned out, for Tommaso married after he had received minor orders; and Pier Antonio, though he did his best to be a monk, remained a secular priest, and died parish priest of Santa Fiora.

Captain Ottonello Ottonelli, of Fanano in the territory of Modena, came to Rome on some business concerning the establishment of a convent of nuns, and meeting with some difficulties, was brought to the holy father by Germanico Fedeli, in order that he might obtain his prayers. As soon as Ottonelli arrived,

the Saint turned to some priests who were present, and said to them, "This man is your brother." He then asked the captain what his profession was; he replied that he was a soldier. "No," said Philip, "not a soldier, but the brother of these;" and then, laying his hand on his head, he blessed him. Now Ottonelli was a married man, had several sons and daughters, and was exceedingly fond of his profession. In a very short time, however, his wife and some of his daughters died; those who survived became nuns, and he himself, in the year 1609, by the inspiration of God was ordained priest, and after some years became a religious among the fathers of the Pious Schools.

In the year 1576 four of our fathers were sent by the Congregation to Milan upon business. One day the holy father suddenly called Francesco Maria Tarugi, and said to him, "Write immediately to our fathers at Milan, and tell them to return home as soon as possible." Tarugi answered that it would not be well to recall them, lest it should create scandal at Milan, as they had not accomplished the business on which they were sent. Philip replied, "Make no answer; you obey me and write; and write that they are to come home immediately." The letter had scarcely arrived at Milan when the plague broke out, although there had not been so much as the least threatening of it previously; and it was so sudden that two of the fathers had great difficulty in getting away, and passing the barrier on their return. One of the four fathers, Pompeo Pateri, had wished a few months before to go to Spain with a prelate who was greatly attached to the Congregation, as well to please the prelate as to facilitate the accomplishment of the

business just mentioned, Milan being at that time under the government of Spain. The fathers were of opinion that he ought to go; the resolution was taken, and the packet fastened up to send to him by post when Philip said to F. Agostino Manni, "Write to Pompeo and tell him not to go to Spain, but to stop at Milan." Two months had not passed before a person died whose death would have entailed a very serious loss upon the Congregation, if Pompeo had not been in Milan at the time.

While the church of the Madonna dei Lumi was being built at S. Severino for our Congregation, the Saint said these precise words to some Barnabite fathers, "I am building for you." The Congregation was established in the church, but six years after the death of the holy father, the community gave up the church to the Barnabites, as the Saint had foreseen. He also predicted to the Barnabites that they would have the college of St. Paul at Rome, and designated in the spirit of prophecy the place where it would be, many years before the event, as is related in the annals of their order.

He foretold to the Venerable Giovanni Leonardi,<sup>1</sup> the founder of the Clerks Regular of the Mother of God, who was his penitent, that he would not live to see his congregation erected into a religious order, saying to him, "God does not will to do everything in your time."

Pier Filippo Lazzarelli, a parish priest, was in danger of losing his benefice through the favour which his

<sup>1</sup> Born 1543, founded at Lucca an Oratory; in 1621, twelve years after the death of the founder, the Congregation became a religious order with solemn vows. See CARDINAL CAPECELATRO, *op. cit.* vol. ii., pp. 179 *et seqq.* (English Translation).

enemies enjoyed with a certain influential prelate. This drove him into such despair that he left off saying mass and office, and determined to shoot his adversary. Whilst he was in this state, it happened that one of his brothers brought him one morning to our church, and as they were both kneeling before the high altar, the priest turned and saw the Saint at the confessional. Although he had never seen him before, he felt so drawn to him that he could not restrain himself from going and throwing himself at his feet, without knowing what he was doing. Philip, seeing him full of care and not uttering a word, took hold of him by the ear and said, "You are tempted, are you not?" He replied, "I am tempted to such a degree, Father, that I am on the point of doing great evil," and he then told him all that he had in his mind. Philip answered, "Go away, and do not be afraid; in a fortnight you will be freed from these troubles," and having said this he heard his confession. At the end of the fortnight the priest met his adversary, who said, "I give up to you now, and consider myself to have lost my cause, as my patron has been removed from his office." The priest then remembered the holy father's words, and gave God thanks for preserving him from the great sin he had meditated.

The same thing happened to Orazio Ricci, a knight of Malta. He was in the service of Cardinal Frederick Borromeo, and was greatly afflicted because of a serious accusation set on foot against him in the Cardinal's court, which involved his honour and reputation. He rose very early one morning in great distress of mind, and went into the open air to give vent in some measure to the storm which agitated him. In the

street he met Philip, who asked him where he was going; he answered that he was going to take the air, but that if his Reverence wished anything else of him he might command him freely. Philip, who had seen in spirit all his distress, took him with him to the palace of the auditor of the Camera, who was at that time Orazio Borghese, brother of Paul V., with whom the Saint had some important business. As it was so early they had to wait a long time, during which the Saint began reading; but the knight was more disturbed than ever, especially at finding himself shut up in an antechamber when he had intended to be out in the open air, and yet he was ashamed to take leave of Philip. Just when his weariness had come to such a pitch that he could not possibly stay any longer, Philip rose from his chair, and looking fixedly at him took his hand and pressed it, saying, "Do not be afraid; it will all come to nothing, and in the end everything will turn out well for you; I assure you of it." The knight was astonished, but at the same time greatly consoled and filled with a lively hope that all would be as the Saint had prophesied. In a fortnight the Cardinal dismissed from his service the man who was persecuting Ricci, and the knight rose higher than ever in the favour of the Cardinal, who at last got him appointed as chamberlain in the household of Clement VIII., everything falling out to his advantage according to the words of the holy father.

In 1580, Domenico Ridolfi, of the order of the Clerks Regular, was sent by his superiors from Naples to Cremona. When he arrived in Rome, hearing of Philip, he went immediately to him and found him at the confessional. He kissed his hand and paid his



respects to him, when Philip with a blithe countenance said to him, "Go cheerfully where holy obedience sends you, and attend to the salvation of souls; and know that in progress of time you will be made a bishop, in order to labour more effectually for the salvation of others. But I warn you that in this journey you will run a great risk of your life, and though by favour of our Lord and His most holy Mother, you will come safely out of the danger, it will not be without great difficulty." The father set off for Cremona, and when he came to the mountains of Florence, trying to pass over a broad ditch which was full of liquid clay, of which he was not aware, he fell in together with his horse, and it was so deep that both the beast and himself sank up to the neck. His companions were unable to assist him, and began to make the commendation of his soul. At that moment the good father thought of Philip and called him to his aid. In an instant he began to have the use of his hands, and by little and little got out of the clay, though half dead; whilst the horse was afterwards extricated by the help of two pair of oxen. He arrived at Cremona and laboured in his order till the year 1619, when Paul V. appointed him bishop of Oria; the whole of Philip's prediction being thus fulfilled to the letter.

It is related of St. Francis de Sales, then a very young man, that on his first visit to Rome, having a great desire to know those who then lived there with the reputation of sanctity, he went from that motive to visit Philip, and that the Saint kissed him on the forehead and foretold that he would be a great servant of God and most useful to the Church; and there exist old pictures representing the incident.





THE SACRISTY.

The fathers of the Congregation observed that everything he said, even though it seemed to be but a casual remark, happened to the letter, sometimes long after his death. We shall give two instances just as they are recorded.

He predicted to a certain person, who wished to convert all the women of bad character in Rome, that he would not only be unsuccessful, but would be perverted himself, and then in the end would marry; all which happened as he had said. Fra Nicolò Ridolfi, a Florentine noble, took the Dominican habit when he was quite a youth. By the prior's wish Philip clothed him, and said to him, "I make a friar of you now, and you shall one day make a friar of me." When Ridolfi was made Master General of the Dominicans, one of the first things that he did was to order the office of St. Philip to be recited throughout the whole of the order, and it was then made apparent how the Saint's prediction was fulfilled. Another time Philip said to F. Pietro Consolini, as if joking, "You will one day see me dragged through the Banchi." Many years after his death, a marble statue of the Saint was made for the new sacristy where it is at present to be seen; and although they would naturally have brought it through the Strada di Panico, some hindrances arose which compelled them to bring it through the Banchi. Father Pietro happened unawares to meet the kind of truck on which they were drawing the statue, and being told that it was the statue of Philip, he began to weep with emotion, and related the Saint's prediction which was thus fulfilled.

## CHAPTER VI

### HE PROPHECIES TO SEVERAL THAT THEY WILL BE CARDINALS OR POPES

PHILIP prophesied to many that they would be Cardinals, and to others that they would be Popes. Some youths were one day in his room, and among them were Pietro Aldobrandini, the Abate Crescenzi, and Marcello Vitelleschi. The holy father, though there was no vacancy in the Holy See, or anything to suggest the conversation, called Pietro Aldobrandini to him, and commanded him under holy obedience to say to his companions, "Father Philip says I am to tell you that in a short time you will have to call me *Illustrissimo*, and that you will esteem it a favour to have an opportunity of speaking with me." Pietro obeyed out of the respect which he had for the Saint, but he blushed and was not a little ashamed. In a short time the Holy See became vacant, and Cardinal Ippolito Aldobrandini, his uncle, being elected Pope, Pietro was made a Cardinal. A little while before, Philip, as if he were making game of him, said to Pietro, who was still a youth, "See, what I am come to, that I shall shortly have to call you *Illustrissimo*!"

Giovan Francesco Aldobrandini, nephew of Clement VIII. and general of the Holy Church, went to Philip's room, and saw stuck up there two Cardinal's armorial bearings sketched on paper, with two death's heads in

the shield. Wishing to know the meaning of this, he asked what the two Cardinal's hats and death's heads signified. Philip, with some little reluctance, said to him, "They signify that after my death I shall have two Cardinals in my Congregation;" and accordingly, a year after the Saint's death, Francesco Maria Tarugi and Cesare Baronius, both priests of the Congregation, were made Cardinals. Indeed, twenty years before their promotion he had spoken of it to Mgr. Paolo Ricuperati. At various times he spoke of it to others, and particularly to Francesco Neri, a priest of the company of Jesus, who asked the Saint if Baronius would ever be Pope. Philip answered expressly that he would not; so that when Baronius was in conclave after the death of Clement VIII., and was commonly reported to be near to the papacy, Francesco confidently asserted that he would not be chosen, because the blessed Philip had told him it would not be so.

Girolamo Panfilio testifies that Philip prophesied to him that he would be a Cardinal. "When I went to confession one morning," says Girolamo, "to the blessed father, who was ill, he said to me, 'Would you like to be a Cardinal?' I answered that I never thought of such a thing. He rejoined, 'Well, you will be a Cardinal.' I laughed at him and said, 'And pray who will make me one?' However, the blessed father repeated twice over, 'I tell you you will be a Cardinal.'" Cardinal Panfilio received the hat from Clement VIII. many years after the Saint's death.

Cardinal Innocenzio del Bufalo speaks as follows: "In 1593 or 1594, if I remember rightly, the blessed Father Philip told me that I should have a canonry at St. Peter's. I laughed at this, because I was not in

the Pope's service or even known to him, so far as I could tell, and I did not see how my appointment could come about; and the oftener Father Philip repeated it the less I believed it. However in 1594, about the month of August if I remember rightly, Cardinal Aldobrandini, without my having sought it or made any efforts for it, sent for me and told me that the Pope thought of giving me the canonry of St. Peter's, which was vacant by the death of Monsignor Maffei. The following day or a few days afterwards, I went to see the blessed Father Philip, and showed great signs of joy, which I really felt, about my appointment to this canonry; he said that this was nothing, for that the Pope would also make me Cardinal. This seemed so unlikely, and indeed so impossible, that I laughed immoderately at him; but for all that, he repeated it several times, not only that day, but over and over again at other times. Afterwards, when by the grace of God and his Holiness I was created Cardinal, I learnt that the blessed Father Philip had predicted it several times to Sister Silvia del Bufalo, my sister, a nun at Torre di Specchi; and on one occasion when news came to Rome of a dangerous illness with which I had been seized in France, my sister said that I should certainly not die, because I must be a Cardinal first, according to the prediction of the blessed Father Philip."

Cardinal Francesco Diatristano<sup>1</sup> in like manner says, "When I was young, and living at Rome as chamberlain of honour to Clement VIII., Cardinal Pietro Aldobrandini took me to the church of S. Maria

<sup>1</sup> Francis, Count Dietrichstein, Bishop of Olmütz, cr. Cardinal 1598, d. 1636.

in Vallicella to visit Father Philip Neri. We went to his room, and as soon as the holy old man saw me, he went into another room, and took out of a basket a very old Cardinal's beretta, which he put on my head laughing, and saying, ' O what a fine young Cardinal ! ' Little thinking that he had the light of prophecy, and imagining that he was making game of me, I was somewhat out of temper ; but partly shame, and partly respect for his age and the presence of others, made me keep down my anger. However, not long after, the event justified the Saint's action, and at the same time condemned my vexation, which I also condemn now. I have related the matter just as it happened, for the glory of the Saint, and I subscribe it with my own hand, and seal it with my seal in token of its truth."

As to the papacy, whenever the Holy See was vacant, he almost always heard, either sleeping or waking, a voice telling him which of the Cardinals would be Pope. After the death of Pius IV., four or five days before the election of the new Pope, Philip was with Marcello Ferro, one of his spiritual children, when, lifting his eyes to heaven and going almost into an ecstasy, he said, " The Pope will be elected on Monday." A day or two afterwards, as Marcello was walking with him, he begged him, as he had already told him the day of the Pope's election, to tell him who would be Pope. Philip answered, " Come now, I will tell you, the Pope will be one whom you have never thought of, and whom no one has spoken of as likely, and that is Cardinal Alessandrino, and he will be elected on Monday evening without fail." This was the glorious St. Pius V., whose elevation the Saint



had already predicted to others, and who was elected as he had said. After the death of St. Pius V., Marcello remembered how Philip had prophesied his election, and accordingly prayed him very importunately to tell him who would be Pope now. Philip asked him who was talked of in Rome as likely; Marcello answered, "Cardinal Morone;" "No," replied Philip, "it will not be Morone, but Boncompagni," who was elected accordingly, and took the name of Gregory XIII.

During the vacancy of the Holy See after the death of Sixtus V., Cardinal Niccolò Sfondrato came one day to visit the holy father. Philip sent him word not to come upstairs, but to stay in the guest-room, and he would come down to him. When he came down he found there Pietro Paolo Crescenzi, who was afterwards Cardinal, with the Abate Giacomo his brother, Marcello Vitelleschi, and others; and before he spoke to the Cardinal he commanded all of them to kiss the feet of his Eminence, which they did. A day or two afterwards the same Cardinal came into our church, and Francesco della Molara went and told the Saint of it. Philip answered, "That Pope, eh?" Even while Sixtus V. was alive, Philip had in different ways pointed to Cardinal Sfondrato as the future Pope, and once in particular, about a year before the death of Sixtus. The Cardinal was in Philip's room according to his custom, with Marcello Vitelleschi and others. Philip said to Marcello, "Open that cupboard, and give me the Pope's cap which is there;" this was a skull-cap which had belonged to St. Pius V., and was preserved by the holy father as a relic. Philip took it and tried to put it on the Cardinal's head, saying to him, "Try

it a little, and see how well it fits you," meaning by that to insinuate what was to happen later. Urban VII., who was chosen to succeed Sixtus, only lived twelve days, and then Cardinal Sfondrato was elected, and took the name of Gregory XIV.

But his prediction of the papacy to Cardinal Ippolito Aldobrandini was even more wonderful. Some time before, the Cardinal was in the garden of Curzio de' Massimi together with Cardinal Cusano, the Saint, and some others, when Curzio came to Philip and said to him, "I wish your Reverence would get me taken into the service of Cardinal Aldobrandini." Philip replied, "I will do so without fail; leave it to me; for I tell you he will not die Cardinal;" and four months afterwards he was elected Pope. The very evening before the election, Philip said to the Abate Marco Antonio Maffa amongst others, that Aldobrandini would be Pope and would take the name of Clement, which he did; and that same evening, Mgr. Papia sent the Saint a sonnet, asking him to pray that they might have a good Pope and a speedy election, upon which Philip sent him another sonnet in reply, containing the same prophecy of Aldobrandini's election.

To Leo XI., before he was Cardinal and when he was the Grand Duke's ambassador, Philip made three prophecies in the few following words; "Signor Alessandro, you will be Cardinal and Pope, but your reign will last only a short time." Fra Girolamo Ghetti, a Roman, who was afterwards general of the order of the Hermits of St. Augustine, when preaching during the octave of the Saint's canonization, declared that he heard this from Leo's own mouth when he was Cardinal; and it was confirmed by Gregory XV., who

hearing what Fra Girolamo had said in his sermon added, "I am sure it is true, for when I was auditor of the Rota and went to kiss the feet of Leo XI., amongst other things he said, 'I shall not weary people long, for I shall soon be out of the way,' " which was fulfilled by his early death.

Although Philip almost always foresaw who would be Pope, he never mentioned it except for some grave reason, or in familiar conversation with some of his penitents, as if he were in joke; and he used always to add that we ought by no means to give easy credence to similar predictions, or to wish for them, because many deceits and snares of the devil might be hidden in them; and he was very severe towards those who went to tell him that they had had revelations or made prophecies.

END OF VOL. I.

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